

I Shall Seal the Heavens

(我欲封天)

Book 9

The Demon Sovereign Returns

The Peak of the Vast Expanse!

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Story Description:

Shall Seal the Heavens is currently one of the most popular xianxia stories in China. It is about a failed young scholar named Meng Hao who gets forcibly recruited into a Sect of Immortal Cultivators. In the Cultivation world, the strong prey on the weak, and the law of the jungle prevails. Meng Hao must adapt to survive. And yet, he never forgets the Confucian and Daoist ideals that he grew up studying. This, coupled with his stubborn nature, set him on the path of a true hero. What does it mean to “Seal the Heavens?” This is a secret that you will have to uncover along with Meng Hao!

Original Story can be found here: [Link](#)

Chapter 1410: Bronze Replaces the Heavens

The Vast Expanse.

Endless. Immeasurable. Perhaps it had an ending point, but up til now, no one had ever reached it, except perhaps someone who had Transcended.

It was too large, and contained too many worlds and Realms. There were too many peoples within it, too many dangers. There were vortexes which contained inexplicable, indescribable forms of life, or legends which had long since been reduced to nothing more than ruins.

In addition to that, there was dust, which was actually the most common sight in the Vast Expanse. Within that dust could be found corpses, rubble, even magical items. In fact, anything could be found within the dust, if you searched for it.

At this moment, in some indeterminable location within the Vast Expanse, a corpse could be seen floating there. It was impossible to say how long it had been there. It was completely withered up, although it had not rotted. It wore a suit of armor which was cracked and broken, and completely gray in color.

Next to the corpse was a withered-up dog, which despite appearing to be dead, apparently refused to leave its master's side.

Neither the corpse nor the armor showed any signs of life, as if they had been dead for a very, very long time.

A hole had been punctured in the corpse's bag of holding, and almost everything which had once been inside had long since scattered out into the Vast Expanse. Years ago, a woman had escaped from within, only to find that she had no idea where she was.

As for exactly how the bag of holding came to be broken open, she didn't know. She only remembered that after it was opened, she was suddenly free on the outside. Then she caught sight of the person she hated more

than anyone else, wearing a suit of armor that flickered dully.

A moment later, a wind swept through that part of the Vast Expanse, carrying everything away. Even the woman was swept far off into the distance.

As for the corpse, it also floated along within the wind. If you looked closely, you would be able to see a bronze lamp on the corpse's forehead. When the corpse's bag of holding had broken open some time ago, the bronze lamp didn't drift away like most everything else inside, but instead had slowly floated over to the corpse's forehead.

In the past, that bronze lamp had changed the fate of the person who was now this corpse!

Even Shui Dongliu had been unable to fathom or comprehend the details.

Back when the corpse was alive, and had Soul Lamps, this bronze lamp had never made an appearance, nor did it even shine. But now that the corpse lacked any Soul Lamps at all, the bronze lamp finally appeared.

Long ago, the person whose corpse this was had actually speculated that this lamp, which had changed his fate, which he had taken from an Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite temple, was possibly... a Soul Lamp belonging to some unknown individual.

He wasn't sure who, nor did he have the means to speculate. 1

Back when the bronze lamp emerged from the bag of holding, it floated out and began to fuse into the corpse's forehead, which was something that even the corpse would never have been able to predict would happen.

Time went by. Every year, the bronze lamp would sink a bit further into the corpse's forehead. Ten years passed. Then a hundred. Then a thousand. By that time, the bronze lamp wasn't visible at all, as it had completely sunk into the corpse's forehead.

Perhaps it was because of that bronze lamp that, over the course of the thousand years which passed, not a single entity of any sort approached the corpse, but instead preferred to avoid it.

Not only did the lamp preserve the corpse, it ensured that it had the chance to one day open its eyes again....

At some point throughout the years, a miniscule scrap of aura had appeared on the corpse. It seemed like the aura of an Immortal, yet also resembled a Devil. It was strange, multifarious, and bizarre. Anyone who had fought in the war of the Mountain and Sea Realm would quickly identify it as... Demonic qi!

It was the aura of that legendary entity from the Mountain and Sea Realm, the Demon Sovereign!

This corpse was none other than Meng Hao!

After being teleported away by the meat jelly, he had lapsed into unconsciousness. However, in the final moment before that had happened, images from throughout his life passed through his mind. In the end, he saw the parrot wiping away its mind. He saw the meat jelly sacrificing its life to teleport him to safety. Those images broke his heart, and left him reeling mentally. And yet, there was nothing he could do to stop them. He could only watch.

Tears of blood streamed down his face. After being teleported away, and just before passing out, he had smiled, an anguished smile, a smile that contained insanity and an unwillingness to die.

He would go to any lengths to recover, although he wasn't sure how to. He thought about the Nirvana Fruit from his bloodline, and he also thought about the bronze lamp in his bag of holding.

Using his last scrap of energy, he managed to pull out the bronze lamp. Then he used a unique secret magic that he had acquired from Shui Dongliu's legacy, a technique which made it possible to possess another person's Soul Lamp. It was an unsettling magic which even Shui Dongliu might not have remembered, and wouldn't have trusted to work. Actually, it didn't come from Nine Seals, but from the other part of the soul that made up Shui Dongliu.

In the moment that Meng Hao unleashed the magic, he lost consciousness. After that, everything was a blank.

Over the course of the thousand years, his body had withered continuously. His life force had long since faded away, and everything about him had dispersed. The only thing that remained was the bronze Soul Lamp, which continued to fuse with him. One day, when the bronze lamp was fused fully into his forehead, a Heaven-shaking, Earth-toppling change occurred within him.

Rumbling sounds filled him as the bronze lamp gradually took over the position of his lost Prime Lamp. As the Prime Lamp, it then began to remould his qi passageways, and reconstruct his cultivation base!

With each day that passed, his atrophied flesh would pulse with a bit more qi and blood. His internal organs had once been completely desiccated, but now they were recovering. A few days later, his heart thumped for the first time in a thousand years. Around him in the Vast Expanse, the starry sky vibrated, causing countless life forms hidden in the area to flee in terror.

The sound of the heartbeat continued to echo out as blood flowed through his body. Gradually, that ruined blood began to recover!

Soon, his body wasn't withered anymore, and he even seemed to be breathing.

His blood flowed, and the bronze lamp slowly began to burn, sending boundless green smoke throughout his body. It eventually reached his cultivation base, which caused life force to ignite within him.

A powerful aura suddenly spread out which caused the Vast Expanse in the area to shake. Meng Hao had built up so much power that his eyelids fluttered, as if he would soon... open his eyes.

As he grew stronger and stronger, the aura within him became more terrifying. A vortex rose up around him, a vortex that might not match up to the chaos unleashed upon the Vast Expanse by the copper mirror and parrot all those years ago, and yet, was still shocking.

However, after a few breaths of time, the aura faded into weakness. Meng Hao's body gradually grew still, and the strength faded from his eyes. He became peaceful and unmoving.

Apparently, that burst of power wasn't enough to awaken him. He needed more strength to open his eyes, more life force; at the moment, he simply didn't have enough.

Therefore, he needed to wait a bit longer....

Gradually, his body withered up again, and his heart stopped beating. His blood dried up, and his aura faded. He now looked no different from the corpse he had been earlier. However, there was a spark of life within him that hadn't been there before, flickering and burning ever so slowly.

Time passed. Ten years later, Meng Hao was still floating out in the Vast Expanse. One day, a flying shuttle suddenly appeared.

A pile of miscellaneous items could be seen piled up in the back of the shuttle, and a closer look made it obvious that most of them had been collected from within the dust that filled the Vast Expanse. There were even a few dessicated corpses among the random objects.

A pretty young woman sat cross-legged in the flying shuttle, although she was dressed up in a way that made her seem older than she was. Apparently, she didn't want people to guess her true age.

Her cultivation base was not weak, though; only powerful people would ever dare to fly around alone in the Vast Expanse. Based on the fluctuations which rippled out from her, she was in the Dao Realm.

Behind her sat a young man, who seemed much weaker than her, and was acting very subserviently. He would occasionally look out at the Vast Expanse, his expression both curious and nervous. Eventually, his expression became one of distracted curiosity; when the young woman soon noticed, she immediately began to reprimand him.

"Don't forget this time!" she said sternly. "When we get there, you have to act tough! Put on a good show, and don't make any mistakes with your story!"

"Remember, you are the heir of the Yun Clan. You are a legitimate descendant of what was once the most glorious clan in this part of the Vast Expanse! The great Vast Expanse School is looking for a son-in-law

for their Holy Daughter, and she'll definitely pick you!

"They are a powerful force that can even tangle with the Immortal God Continent and the Devil Realm. Supposedly, they know the secret of how to access the teleportation portal that leads out of the Vast Expanse!" The young woman's eyes gleamed with anticipation.

The young man glanced downward. Voice somewhat feeble, he said, "B-but, the Yun Clan is just a small clan. They were famous years and years ago, not now. Plus... I'm not really a legitimate descendant."

"Shut up!" the young woman barked, glaring at the young man, who quickly bowed his head deferentially. "So what! The first generation Patriarch of the Yun Clan had a marriage agreement in place with the Vast Expanse School. It doesn't matter what year or what generation, the heir of the Yun Clan can become the beloved partner of one of the Holy Daughters of the great Vast Expanse School. The Yun Clan fell into decline years ago, and only exists in the mortal world now, so there's no way they can fulfill their end of the marriage agreement. But who cares? I managed to buy a copy of the agreement, and I also have our clan's precious treasure that lets me wield 2-Essences power. We'll definitely succeed!

"Besides, we won't be dealing with the upper ranks of the Vast Expanse School. Whoever we meet with, they'll have to maintain face, so as long as the marriage agreement stands, I can just wait until a lot of people are around, then pull it out for everyone to see. The Vast Expanse School might be strong, but they also have to be reasonable. Even if they don't abide by the agreement, they'll still be sure to compensate us in some way!" Even as the young woman spoke, she continued to scan their surroundings. Suddenly, she turned her head to look off into the distance, where she saw a corpse floating within the dust, not too far from the flight path of the flying shuttle.

"Eee? That ancient corpse is fully intact, plus it has a dog with it." With that, she reached out and made a grasping motion, pulling Meng Hao over to her. After looking him over, her eyes glittered.

“Not bad. Not bad at all. With all these corpses and other random things to help pay for expenses, this trip won’t have been a waste after all.” Smiling, she quickly threw Meng Hao and the mastiff into the back of the flying shuttle to join the other random objects and corpses she had collected from the dust of the Vast Expanse. Proceeding onward, she continued to rebuke the young man.

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1. The bronze lamp first appeared in chapter 809. It was the act of taking the lamp in chapter 818 that, according to Shui Dongliu, allowed Meng Hao “change his fate.” He later used it as a vessel for Divine Flame, and in chapter 960 came to the conclusion that it was a Soul Lamp of mysterious origin

Chapter 1411: The Vast Expanse Bell Heralds the Arrival of a Paragon!

The young woman was so focused on rebuking the young man that she didn't notice what happened when she threw Meng Hao into the back of her flying shuttle. His eyelids twitched, although he didn't quite yet have the strength to open his eyes.

Furthermore, the young woman didn't notice that after Meng Hao landed in the back of the flying shuttle, various tiny vortexes opened up around him. Then, the mist which surrounded them formed into strands which began to seep into the flying shuttle!

The strands of mist circulated inside of the shuttle and then began to enter into Meng Hao. More and more of the mist vanished into him, like a river pouring into a dry channel.

Apparently, Meng Hao's injuries were so severe that he lacked the power to even absorb the mist of the Vast Expanse on his own. However, there was something about the flying shuttle that helped him to gradually begin building up the power he lacked to open his eyes.

Time passed, and for some reason the flying shuttle seemed to be going faster and faster. Eventually, the young woman, despite being so involved in berating the young man, finally noticed the increase in speed. At first, her jaw dropped, but then she began to laugh heartily.

"See, little brother? It's no wonder the great Vast Expanse School has such a reputation. The starry sky in their territory is obviously blessed with some sort of Essence that has increased our speed. I bet that Essence can even identify hostile forces. The more hostile you are toward them, the slower you'll move. The less hostile, the faster!" Having reached this conclusion, the young woman laughed again. Behind her, the young man stared in shock. In his estimation, that wasn't what was happening at all, and yet, he didn't dare to open his mouth. Instead, he nodded and pretended to be in awe of the young woman.

He knew that his sister wasn't the sharpest tool in the shed, but he also knew that deep down, she was a good person. Not only did she enjoy it when people looked at her fawningly, more importantly, when she was happy, she spent less time rebuking him.

Burying his reservations, the young man began to think about everything that had happened on their journey. They had encountered other flying shuttles along the way, and although his sister had never paid any attention to any of them, he had. Eventually, his attention was drawn to the collection of corpses and other objects in the back of the flying shuttle.

He looked at the corpse of Meng Hao, and suddenly realized that their flying shuttle had begun to move faster at almost the exactly same time that his sister picked up that very corpse.

However, considering the level of his cultivation base, he didn't notice anything out of the ordinary about it. No matter how he studied it, it didn't look like anything other than a corpse. A few days later, the young man stopped worrying about it so much, although he would still cast occasional cautious glances back at Meng Hao.

Meng Hao was already awake.

However, what had awoken was not his body, but his soul. After being pulled onto the flying shuttle, and absorbing some of the power of the Vast Expanse, he reached a state in which he felt almost as if he were observing everything around him in a dream state.

His soul hurt. He thought back to the Mountain and Sea Realm, to his father and mother, to his sister, to Xu Qing, and to so many other familiar faces.

He thought back to the butterfly, and how it had eventually landed on that green coffin.

He thought back to the parrot, and then the meat jelly, which was now devoid of any traces of life. All of that was in the past now. The only companion he still had to accompany him was the mastiff.

The mastiff wasn't dead. It had been asleep the entire time, hibernating.

Even in its sleep, it still stood watch over him. It had paid a heavy price, and was even now only capable of sleeping.

“This enmity... must be avenged!!

“Mountain and Sea Realm... I will return to you!!

“Mom and dad, sister, Qing'er... wait for me....” Meng Hao's soul stared out of the flying shuttle into the distance. He had no idea where the Mountain and Sea Butterfly was, not even in which direction it lay. He could only trust his feelings to guess where it might be.

The pain he felt was something which would not subside, and had already changed him. He was colder now, and more silent.

He could tell that the only reason he was alive right now was because the mastiff had protected him, and the meat jelly had sacrificed everything for him. Most importantly, though, was what he had done just before losing consciousness. He had... taken out the bronze lamp!

The mysteries surrounding that lamp were unfathomable. It had replaced all of his Soul Lamps; instead of having thirty-three, he had only one. However, after the lamp's aura had melded with his Demonic qi, and the resulting pressure was even more terrifying than all of his other 33 Soul Lamps added together. “This bronze lamp... just who exactly did it belong to?”

During the process of studying the changes and transformations inside of him, Meng Hao eventually noticed the brother and sister duo on the flying shuttle. The older sister was thick-headed, and the younger brother was weak but shrewd. Meng Hao looked them over, then ignored them. The young man occasionally glanced back at him, but Meng Hao chose to remain still and silent.

However, were it not for this brother and sister, and the help of their flying shuttle, a random coincidence that allowed him to absorb the mist of the Vast Expanse, then it would have taken far, far longer for his soul to awaken.

That was something Meng Hao wouldn't forget.

His injuries were so numerous that even after a thousand years of absorbing the bronze lamp, more time was required to restore his cultivation base.

For now, he could only bury his thoughts of spilling a sea of blood to gain vengeance. But he knew... that the day would come when he would get his revenge!

Months went by in which he maintained silence. Normally, the trip taken by the flying shuttle would have gone on longer, but now, it was rapidly coming to an end. Up ahead could be seen... an astonishingly large heavenly body!

It was not a land mass like the Immortal God Continent or the Devil Realm Continent. It was a planet!

This planet could definitely be listed among the astonishing heavenly bodies like the Immortal God Continent. However, if the lands on the planet were unwrapped and laid out flat, they would definitely dwarf that very land mass.

It was simply gargantuan, so large that it could only be taken in fully from a distance. In fact, it was so big that it almost seemed to be propping up the starry sky of the Vast Expanse.

If you compared the Mountain and Sea Realm to this planet, it would be like comparing an ant to an elephant!

Surrounding the planet was a dark yellow ring. Shockingly, if you studied that ring closely, you would find it was made up of countless asteroids, large and small. Simply looking at the planet was terrifying, and would leave one completely shaken.

Innumerable beams of light could be seen flying into and out from the planet, making it look even more dazzling.

“See that? That’s Planet Vast Expanse! Heavens! How could there be a planet so big? Compared to the land mass that we come from, it’s simply enormous. You could fit our home inside of it ten thousand times over! A hundred thousand. Maybe a million....” The young woman’s tone was quite

grandiose when she began speaking, but in the end, she trailed off into silence as she stared at the huge planet in front of her.

The young man next to her was also staring with wide eyes.

Neither of them noticed that behind them, Meng Hao had just stirred. Although he still couldn't open his eyes, his soul was also staring at Planet Vast Expanse, and within the eyes of his soul, a strange fire had begun to burn.

The young woman took a deep breath, and her eyes began to shine. "No wonder they say that it can vie for a place among the Immortal God Continent and the Devil Realm.... Wow, the Planet Vast Expanse!

"This is the home of the legendary... Vast Expanse School, which was created at the same time as the Vast Expanse itself, and has the only teleportation portal leading out!

"Little brother, I've decided. You definitely have to marry that Holy Daughter!" The young woman's eyes shone with determination, and she flicked her sleeve, sending the flying shuttle closer and closer to Planet Vast Expanse.

However, as the flying shuttle got closer, a bright shield suddenly sprang up, sweeping out to cover the whole planet, and the starry sky which surrounded it. Every cultivator that it passed, regardless of the level of their cultivation base, was instantly locked in place in the starry sky, incapable of moving even an inch. Shocked expressions appeared as everyone wondered what was happening.

It was at this point that the sound of an ancient bell began to toll from somewhere on Planet Vast Expanse. The austere, sonorous sound swept out into the starry sky, pushing away the mist of the Vast Expanse and causing intense pressure to weigh down.

Dong!

Dong!

Dong!

As the sound of the bell rang out, cultivators of the Vast Expanse School on Planet Vast Expanse were all completely shaken. The tolling continued, it soon wasn't just the ordinary cultivators who were surprised. The powerful experts who made up the inner strength of the Vast Expanse School also looked up.

When the bell tolled for the fourth time, numerous faces flickered in shock. By the sixth toll of the bell, there were 8-Essences Paragons who began to fly out toward the starry sky surrounding the planet.

However, even as they were flying out, the seventh tolling of the bell could be heard. Somewhere on Planet Vast Expanse, in a sprawling temple, an old man suddenly opened his eyes, and the aura of a 9-Essences Paragon erupted out from him. He instantly stepped out into the starry sky, followed by more powerful experts from Planet Vast Expanse. There were countless beams of light that flew out with incredible speed.

More than a million cultivators had been locked down in the starry sky outside of Planet Vast Expanse, and all of them were shocked and unable to move. And yet, the tolling continued.

Of the group of people frozen in place, most didn't understand what the tolling of the bell indicated, and therefore, took things mostly in stride. However, the people who did know the meaning of the bell couldn't stop their eyes from widening in shock and terror.

"That bell... it's the Vast Expanse Bell!!"

"When a Paragon who isn't a member of the Vast Expanse School arrives... the Vast Expanse Bell will toll!"

"Three tolls means a 7-Essences Paragon. Six tolls indicate 8-Essences. More than that means... a 9-Essences Paragon!!"

"The bell tolled seven times! That means... that a 9-Essences Paragon is here!!" The people outside of Planet Vast Expanse who understood the significance of the tolling bell were completely shocked. They began to look around, and soon, all eyes came to fall on the flying shuttle, which was the only object in the starry sky that hadn't been locked in place!

Upon that very flying shuttle, the young man's eyes were wide, and he was looking around in astonishment at all of the cultivators locked in place. His sister also looked around in shock, but then, began to laugh.

"Little brother, it's time to act tough. It seems the marriage agreement with the Yun Clan is still in effect. I haven't even brought out the jade slip yet, and the Vast Expanse School has already noticed and started ringing the bells to welcome us." Although the young woman's eyes were open wide with delight, the young man's legs were trembling.

"Sister, I don't think that's what's...." Before the young man could finish speaking, they caught sight of the numerous beams of light shooting out from Planet Vast Expanse, and could sense the terrifying levels of their cultivation bases. The young woman only got more excited.

"Little brother, look, they're coming to receive us!" she said excitedly, taking a deep breath as the crowd of people drew nearer.

The young man behind her was flummoxed. He was weak, but very intelligent, and could tell that something strange was going on!

Chapter 1412: Reeling Them In!

Moments ago, when the shield sprang up around Planet Vast Expanse, the thick-headed young woman quickly gathered up all of the items and corpses, including Meng Hao, and put them into her bag of holding. She did it so quickly her younger brother had no time to intervene.

In her simplistic way of thinking, everything she had collected was worth keeping. And yet, she feared that people might look down on them for collecting so many miscellaneous items, which could eventually cause problems when it came to the marriage agreement.

Seeing the numerous incoming beams of light, the young woman got very excited. She quickly straightened her garments and put on a very haughty expression. Then she looked back at her nervous younger brother. Glaring, she said, "Look tough! Remember, you're the heir of the Yun Clan!"

There was no time to say anything else, as the beams of light flew at top speed and came to a stop in front of their flying shuttle.

In the lead was a man wearing a violet-gold robe. His hair was long and white, and he bore the semblance of a celestial being, with eyes that sparkled as if with lightning. He looked the brother and sister duo over, only glancing briefly at the young man before focusing his attention on the young woman. Then his eyes widened slightly.

Behind him were tens of thousands of other cultivators, all of them wearing very serious expressions, almost as if they had come to meet a powerful enemy.

The pressure weighing down from all of these powerful experts was incredible. Although they kept their power in check, the starry sky was still trembling, and everyone nearby could feel the weight of the pressure. The young man on the flying shuttle was shaking and could barely stand up straight. His blood was boiling, and he almost felt as if it were about to explode.

From the look of it, if these people let much more of their aura out, this

young man's body, and those of many of the other cultivators in the area, would be shredded to pieces, killing them instantly.

His older sister had it a bit better off, but was still gritting her teeth and trembling in body and mind. However, she didn't seem to have lost any of her enthusiasm. Apparently... she couldn't see the fierce gleams in the eyes of these powerful experts from the Vast Expanse School.

Clasping hands and bowing deeply, she said, "I am Yun Shan of the Yun Clan. This is our clan's current heir, Yun Feng. Senior members of the Vast Expanse School, greetings!" Then, she quickly pulled out her Yun Clan identity medallion and held it high above her head.

Behind her, Yun Feng nervously clasped hands and bowed his head, cursing inwardly.

In response to Yun Shan's words, the eyes of the experts from the Vast Expanse School glittered. The old man in the leadership position frowned. He looked closer at this girl who called herself Yun Shan, gaze lingering on her bag of holding as he completely ignored the identity medallion.

After a long moment, he said, "Yun Clan...."

The entire time, his eyes were focused on her bag of holding, as if his gaze could actually pierce inside and see Meng Hao. After a moment, his eyes glittered, and he suddenly shook his head and laughed.

"Unlock Vast Expanse. Extend the Starpath. Summon the million disciples. Unveil the Vast Expanse Skyway. Welcome the honored guests!" Apparently, when this man spoke, his words were followed like law. The other powerful experts of the Vast Expanse School bowed their heads as rumbling sounds suddenly emanated out from Planet Vast Expanse. Shockingly, two giants appeared, who bore glittering starlight on their shoulders as they strode forth. In turn, that light began to form into a pathway.

At the same time, numerous beams of light appeared behind the giants. Astonishingly, a million cultivators appeared, all of whom wore the uniforms of Vast Expanse disciples. They fanned out to stand on either side of the path of stars, and as they did... a Skyway formed, lined by a

million disciples.

All of the rogue cultivators out in the starry sky stared with wide eyes. There were some among them who weren't aware of the significance of the bell tolling seven times. But everyone knew what it meant when Planet Vast Expanse was unlocked in such a way, with starlight-bearing giants emerging, and a million disciples forming a road.

"That's the Vast Expanse School's most prestigious welcoming ceremony!"

"It's been years since the Vast Expanse School did this. What powerful sect or clan did this brother and sister team come from?!"

"A million disciples forming a road.... The Vast Expanse School would only hold this ceremony for someone incredibly extraordinary!!" Everyone was completely shaken.

"Please, after you!" said the man in the violet-gold robe, flicking his sleeve and stepping aside. He smiled lightly as he spoke, but his eyes were glued on Yun Shan's bag of holding. The other experts from the Vast Expanse School looked on with thoughtful expressions for a moment before they also stepped aside, leaving the entire path of starry light stretching out unhindered in front of the flying shuttle.

Yun Shan's eyes were wide as saucers as she stared at the scene. It was something she couldn't have imagined happening, not even in her dreams. And yet, it was playing out right here in front of her. Despite her usual thick-headed personality, even she couldn't help but feel a bit suspicious.

"Was the Yun Clan really that incredible in the past?" she said to her brother. "I can't believe a down-and-out clan like them... would actually cause the Vast Expanse School to hold a ceremony like this.

"Hmm. I guess the Yun Clan must have a lot of big secrets that I never found out about. Later on, I'll have to spend a few spirit stones to run a more thorough investigation into them." Of course, her train of thought led her to a strange conclusion, like it usually did. Looking very excited, she immediately stepped onto the path.

She walked along as arrogantly as ever, occasionally chattering to her younger brother.

“Come on, follow me. Keep your head up. Don’t forget, we’re from the Yun Clan, and you’re the heir!

“See how seriously they take us, little brother? The Vast Expanse School! Hahaha!” Although Yun Shan was nervous, her eyes sparkled brightly, and as she walked along, the disciples of the Vast Expanse School bowed respectfully. As for all of the rogue cultivators who had been locked in place earlier, they could do nothing but watch jealously as she entered Planet Vast Expanse.

Her brother walked along behind her, more nervous than ever. Something very strange seemed to be going on, especially when he realized that the Vast Expanse School hadn’t even checked their Yun Clan identification medallions. The reason for that most likely had nothing at all to do with the conclusion his sister had reached.

However, there was nothing to be done about the situation now. The old man in the violet-gold robe followed not too far back, and behind him were the tens of thousands of other powerful experts of the Vast Expanse School.

Yun Feng’s scalp tingled as he walked nervously behind his sister, following closely by the forces from Planet Vast Expanse. “This... this isn’t a welcoming party,” he thought, “this... is a security escort!”

As they proceeded through the starry sky, they eventually reached... Planet Vast Expanse itself!

Planet Vast Expanse was gargantuan, so big that you couldn’t see from one end to the other. The location in which they arrived featured a boundless land filled with mountains, more than a million of them, with some peaks towering high above the mysterious fog and clouds which filled the area.

There were towering palaces which rose up from the peaks of the mountains, giving the entire place the feeling of a majestic, preeminent sect. Chain bridges connected the million mountain peaks, making it easy

to see the borders of what was apparently the preeminent Vast Expanse School!

As soon as Yun Shan and Yun Feng entered the planet, they saw the million mountains, and their minds began to spin. Off to the side, the old man in the violet-gold robe smiled and began to explain.

“There are many cultivator clans on Planet Vast Expanse, but when it comes to sects... there is only the Vast Expanse School! In fact, all of those other clans exist only because of the Vast Expanse School.

“The Vast Expanse School is the very foundation of Planet Vast Expanse, and we have eight temple complexes, with the complex you are looking at now being the eighth.

“As for the lands of our sect, everything under the sky belongs to us!

“However, the true sect is inside of Planet Vast Expanse. Actually, the planet is hollow, and furthermore... is even larger on the inside than it is on the outside. That is the true core of the Vast Expanse School.”

The brother and sister duo couldn't help but gasp as the old man's voice echoed out. They saw the boundless mountains, they saw the numerous pagodas and palaces, they saw the countless cultivators flying to and fro. At first, they had assumed that what they were looking at was the entirety of the Vast Expanse School, but now they realized that it was only... a small portion.

This was only one among eight outer temple complexes.

“If the outer temple complexes are like this,” thought Yun Feng, “then I can only imagine how astonishing the inner core is beneath the surface of the ground....” He was left panting, and for the first time, a gleam of desire appeared in his eyes.

Even as the young man was shaken, his sister suddenly began to laugh.

“Not bad. Not bad at all,” she said. “The Vast Expanse School truly deserves its reputation as the ultimate Daoist society. The Yun Clan definitely falls short, although only by a bit.” Although her face was a bit ashen, she tried to look unimpressed. The sound of her brother's rapidly

increasing heart rate was turning into a quite a headache, though.

The old man in the violet-gold robe laughed lightly. Then he spoke a single sentence, a sentence that contained such power that the air in the area suddenly locked everything in place, motionless.

“The ceremony has been completed, the sect has been assembled, and the formalities have been spoken. Fellow Daoist, the time has come for you to show your face!”

The old man’s eyes glowed as they came to stare fixedly at Yun Shan’s bag of holding.

At the same time, rumbling could be heard, and a powerful wind kicked up as numerous spell formations formed. The million disciples swirled through the air, lining up to form an even larger grand spell formation.

The tens of thousands of powerful experts flanking the man in the violet-gold robe all unleashed explosive energy which caused the sky to dim and everything to shake.

Down below, countless auras erupted out from the million mountains, making the entire place seem like the underworld!

The eruption of energy caused blood to spray out of Yun Feng’s mouth as he teetered on the brink of unconsciousness. His sister stared in shock, and also coughed up blood, her face turning pale white and filling with confusion and shock.

She looked around at all the surrounding cultivators radiating powerful energy and realized that she had never seen so many powerful experts gathered together in one place.

“Seniors, you....” she said, forcing the words out of her mouth.

Of course, the old man in the violet-gold robe was being careful not to push things too far. After all, he could kill this brother and sister team with a single thought. After a moment, he frowned. Considering the level of his cultivation base and his age, he was adept at judging character, and at detecting when people were putting on an act. From the look of things, this brother and sister duo had no idea what was actually going on.

The old man's heart thumped; reaching out with his right hand, he made a grasping gesture, causing Yun Shan's bag of holding to fly out toward him. Instead of grabbing it, though, he simply waved his sleeve.

A bang rang out as the bag of holding burst open, causing countless random objects to spill out everywhere, including corpses....

The old man's eyes flickered. Ignoring the miscellaneous objects, his mind trembled as his eyes came to focus on one corpse in particular!

As soon as he saw it, his eyes began to shine with unprecedented brightness!

Chapter 1413: So, Are You Going To Sell This Corpse?

In the moment that all the corpses spilled out, shocking ripples began to spread in all directions from that one corpse in particular. As a result, the faces of the one million Vast Expanse School disciples turned deathly white, and blood sprayed out of their mouths. Shocked, they began to back up.

At the same time, their cultivation bases were thrown into complete chaos, something they had absolutely no control over.

The faces of the tens of thousands of powerful experts flickered, and their minds spun, as if they were suddenly facing a powerful foe. It was as if, all of a sudden, they were surrounded by mountains of corpses and seas of blood, from within which countless howls emanated out to completely inundate them.

It was a thoroughly shocking development which caused everything to vibrate and shake.

The indescribable energy coming from the corpse swept over everyone, becoming an intense pressure that caused even the one million mighty mountains down below to tremble. The lands quaked as dust and dirt first floated up into the air, and then were slammed back down again. The chain bridges which connected the mountain peaks were swaying back and forth, and countless disciples felt as if their minds were being struck by lightning.

The energy which had previously been emanating out from the million mountains was, as of this moment, being crushed down as if by a huge hand, completely disintegrated.

Everyone in the area gasped in shock. Only the brother and sister team didn't feel any pressure. However, they could see what was happening, and the thick-headed sister turned to look at that one particular corpse, the blood draining from her face in the process as she recalled how she had

picked it up along the way.

“What... what kind of corpse did I pick up...?” she murmured inwardly. She saw the million disciples coughing up blood, she saw the lands trembling, she saw the mountain peaks shaking, she saw the astonishment of the tens of thousands of powerful experts, and she saw the blinding light shining from the eyes of the old man in the violet-gold robe.

One thing she didn't notice was that the mastiff which she had picked up along with the corpse was nowhere to be seen.

As all of this happened, countless gasps and cries of shock and alarm could be heard.

“That's... that's....”

“A Paragon corpse! That's the corpse of a Paragon! Heavens! A 9-Essences Paragon corpse!!”

“No wonder the Vast Expanse Bell tolled. There aren't many 9-Essences Paragons to begin with in the Vast Expanse, and yet somehow, these two people from the Yun Clan... happen to have the corpse of one in their bag of holding!”

“That corpse is a precious treasure!” In the midst of all the commotion, the old man in the violet-gold robe suddenly flicked his sleeve, causing numerous sealing marks to appear and float down onto Meng Hao's corpse. As they settled onto him, everything in the area slowly returned to normal. However, everyone in the area was still in an uproar.

The old man eyed Meng Hao's corpse, then looked over at the young woman who called herself Yun Shan.

“From whence cometh this corpse?” he asked.

“F-found... I found it...” she stammered.

Her words caused everyone to stare wide-eyed with shock, as if what she were saying was unimaginably outrageous. Soon, strange expressions appeared on the faces of the cultivators in the area. As for the old man, he

felt as if a lightning bolt had just struck his mind. After staring in shock for a moment, he smiled wryly.

Although he had appeared to remain calm earlier, his heart had actually been surging with tsunamis of astonishment. There weren't a large number of 9-Essences Paragons in the Vast Expanse. Each and every one was a consummately powerful expert, people... who ordinary folk would be lucky to simply catch a glimpse of. And that was when they were alive. After they died... it would be easier to find a phoenix feather or a qilin horn than to see such a corpse.

9-Essences experts had a longevity that was virtually unending. They would never just pass away into meditation. Either they would try to Transcend into the Daosource Realm, or they would fail in their attempt, and be destroyed in body and spirit. In the latter case, they wouldn't leave a corpse behind.

Another possibility was that they might be killed in battle. However when 9-Essences Paragons fought, it would be unlikely that the defeated party would be behind as an intact body. Most of the time, the final result was a smashed and mangled corpse. Because of all of that, the intact corpse of a 9-Essences Paragon was something exceedingly rare.

The old man in the violet-gold robe spent a moment in thought. He recognized the sequence of cause and effect here. Obviously, this brother and sister team had found this corpse in their journeys. After arriving at Planet Vast Expanse, it attracted the attention of the spell formation, and caused the bell to ring. His previous assumption that someone was hiding in the young woman's bag of holding was simply a mistake.

Everything made sense now. Except for one thing. A dead person shouldn't have attracted the attention of the spell formation and caused the Vast Expanse Bell to ring.

"He still has a bit of life force left in him," he thought. "He must have been in a bitter fight, then somehow managed to flee at a critical moment. He was so severely injured that his soul nearly dispersed. He's likely in a state of recovery which will last for thousands of years." A flicker of greed

appeared in the old man's eyes. Smiling, he reached out his hand to take the corpse; as for the brother and sister duo, he couldn't care less about them.

But then, he frowned as he noticed something on the corpse.

"Hmm, Karma Threads...." he thought. "Well that makes things a bit troublesome. His soul is mostly dispersed, but he still has some connections to this brother and sister, some bit of gratitude linking them together."

As the old man considered what to do, everyone else in the crowd looked on with strange gleams in their eyes. No one seemed to be paying attention to the brother and sister.

Yun Shan was trembling. As of this point, she was terrified, and filled with regret. She wished she had never picked up that corpse, and wished that she had never brought her little brother here to try to con their way into a wedding.

However, even as she trembled in fear, her younger brother sighed and clasped her hand. Normally, his grip was weak, but right now, it was firm.

She looked over in shock at her brother, who forced himself to ignore his fear as he nodded back at her.

A moment later, the old man in the violet-gold robe looked at them with glittering eyes. Smiling, he said, "So, are you going to sell this corpse? I want to buy it."

Yun Shan gaped in shock at the man's request. She was just about to reply when her brother took a step forward. Standing in front of her, he clasped hands and bowed to the old man.

"Senior, I am Yun Feng. I've come to the Vast Expanse School today to ask for the hand of the Vast Expanse Holy Daughter in marriage. This corpse isn't for sale. It's a betrothal gift!" Yun Shan was in complete and utter shock. The words spoken by her younger brother just now, and the way he carried himself, seemed completely out of character.

The old man looked at Yun Feng, eyes flickering with amusement at his

words.

“Well, you’ve got guts. Fine. Join the Vast Expanse School, and I’ll send you directly to the Inner Sect.

“As for the marriage, I’ll give you a chance at that. If you can reach the Dao Realm within two thousand years, then I’ll arrange for you to marry the Vast Expanse Holy Daughter of the current generation at that time!”

Yun Feng hesitated, but his sister was clearly elated. Their entire purpose in coming to the Vast Expanse School was to profit in some way. If her younger brother could become a Vast Expanse School disciple, then that would be the hugest profit imaginable. She was just about to step in and accept, when her brother said, “What about my sister...?”

“Her cultivation base isn’t bad,” the old man replied immediately, “but her foundation is already solidified, making it impossible for her to cultivate the magic of the Vast Expanse School. However, Inner Sect disciples can recruit attendants. Just have your sister be one of your attendants.” As the old man finished speaking, he studied Meng Hao’s corpse, and saw that the Karma Threads connecting it to the brother and sister team had unraveled, indicating that the debt connecting them had been resolved. The old man swished his sleeve, collecting up Meng Hao’s corpse and carrying him off into the distance.

The rest of the cultivators also departed, the images of what they had just seen still playing out in their minds. Soon, a few disciples approached Yun Shan and Yun Feng to begin the formalities of accepting them into the Vast Expanse School. As they walked along, the young man looked around, somewhat in a daze. On the other hand, his sister couldn’t look any more happy; as far as she was concerned, they had struck a goldmine.

She glanced over at her younger brother, and her eyes gleamed with praise and anticipation. In her eyes, her brother had just grown up quite a bit, as was evidenced by the clever and decisive way he had just spoken up.

It was only Yun Feng himself who knew the truth. Moments ago, a voice had spoken in his ear and told him exactly what to say.

“That voice which told me what to do... could it have been... that

corpse?!" A blank look could be seen in his eyes as he nervously followed the Vast Expanse School disciples off into the distance.

Meanwhile, on one of the million mountains that made up the eighth temple complex, the old man in the violet-gold robe strode along, unable to conceal the delight in his eyes. Soon, he was in a location deep within the million mountains, in front of a teleportation portal. Without the slightest hesitation, he stepped into the portal.

It rumbled and then shone with brilliant light, after which the man disappeared. When he reappeared, he was beneath the surface of Planet Vast Expanse, in the core of the Vast Expanse School.

The inside of Planet Vast Expanse had its own starry sky, complete with a sun and moon, as well as planets. Each one of those planets emanated the aura of a powerful expert, all of whom were apparently in secluded meditation.

Also located in the inner core of the planet was a sea of flames, buried within which was... half of a planet!!

That half-planet was mostly broken and shattered, and emanated a sensation of time and rot. Numerous pagodas and temples adorned its surface, and it emanated an ancient air.

The old man in the violet-gold robe immediately sped in the direction of the sea of flames, and the half-planet therein. As he neared, his voice echoed out, "Fellow Daoists, please have a look at what I've brought for you!"

Laughing, he waved his hand, sending Meng Hao's corpse floating out to hover above the buildings down below.

As soon as it appeared, the sealing marks which had been placed on him vanished, allowing shocking fluctuations to surge out and cover the entire half-planet. Countless people down below were astonished, and six streams of 9-Essences aura suddenly swirled out to surround Meng Hao, accompanied by six people.

"The corpse of a Paragon!! Old Fifth, where did you get your hands on

this?!”

“It’s not completely dead, there’s still the remnant of a discarnate soul....”

“A Paragon corpse like this is something incredibly rare. Unfortunately, although the corpse is intact, its innards are withered into almost nothing!”

“It doesn’t matter if its withered! With the resources at the disposal of our Vast Expanse School, we can restore this corpse to peak power in no time! With this corpse, we can carry out the plan to receive the Ninth Paragon earlier than expected!!”

The old man in the violet-gold robe laughed excitedly. It was at this point that a stream of divine sense that was terrifying even to these seven people suddenly exploded out from the half-planet. As it filled the area, the old man and the other six Paragons clasped hands and bowed, serious expressions on their faces.

“Greetings, Sect Leader!”

Chapter 1414: Refining a Paragon Corpse!

That terrifying divine sense was similar to the one from the archaic old man from the Devil Realm Continent. It was in the 9-Essences level, but was at its very peak!

That peak level qualified one to attempt a breakthrough to the Daosource Realm. Of course, powerful souls like that were very rare. For countless years, very few people had ever been able to reach the peak of 9-Essences. In fact, even in an enormous sect like the Vast Expanse School had only ever produced four.

However, those four had all reached a position only one step away from the Daosource!

Unfortunately, from ancient times until the current day, people who could take that final step were as rare as phoenix feathers or qilin horns. In all of the Vast Expanse, there had only ever been two or three... who had completed that step!

All of the others died.

Those who chose not to take that final step, and remained at the peak of 9-Essences, had virtually limitless longevity. Although it wasn't correct to say that they would exist for as long as all Heaven and Earth, they were close to such a level. They had shockingly profound levels of knowledge, and the longer they practiced cultivation, the more powerful they became. However, the Vast Expanse Tribulation came for them once every ten thousand years, and each time it came, it was more terrifying than the last time, until it managed to destroy them.

Because this was so, when it came to comparing those at the peak of 9-Essences, unless someone had a rare, unique Essence, then strength would be determined by who had practiced cultivation in that level for the longest time.

The powerful divine sense enveloped Meng Hao, boring inside of him, inspecting every inch of his being. The other seven Paragons remained off to the side, somber expressions on their faces.

After enough time passed for half an incense stick to burn, it slowly retracted, and then an ancient voice echoed out.

“This person received the legacy of a Daoist magic in a previous life, which artificially propelled him to the 9-Essences level. However, the result was significant damage that would be difficult to notice upon cursory examination. Even though he is still alive, it would be so difficult for him to make further progress that to do so would require something akin to defying Heaven.

“This person experienced profound sorrow and grief in life, and apparently went through a huge catastrophe. Most likely, he witnessed the destruction of his homeworld. Everyone else died, with him being the sole survivor. Even his narrow escape left him with only a discarnate soul.

“The level of rancor within him is profound, and his previous obsessions still linger. His mind was strong, and his fleshly body even stronger. He even commands some sort of Essence magic that exceeds my comprehension. Very interesting.

“All of those things are secondary, though. Most interesting of all is his aura. It is neither Immortal nor Devil, and it differs from the Vast Expanse. It contains fluctuations the likes of which... I have never seen before.

“Considering everything I have revealed, it is likely that the seven of you have already guessed who he is!” As the ancient voice echoed about, the seven Paragons, including the old man in the violet-gold robe, had thoughtful looks on their faces.

A moment later, one of their number, a middle-aged cultivator, suddenly spoke, his eyes glittering as he said, “One thousand years ago. The Mountain and Sea Realm. Meng Hao!”

In response to his words, the eyes of the other Paragons flickered. The old man in the violet-gold robe looked over at Meng Hao’s corpse. Then they began to discuss the matter.

“It’s most likely him. A thousand years ago, the Immortal God Continent and the Devil Realm Continent attacked the Mountain and Sea Realm,

which was the evolved version of the Paragon Immortal Realm. It is said that the only thing which survived was a World-Butterfly, which entered the Green Coffin Vortex. A Dao was passed on to Meng Hao, pushing him into the 9-Essences level. But then he was seriously wounded, and even as he hovered on the brink of death, he was teleported away.”

“So, it’s him. Even to this day, the Immortal God Continent and the Devil Realm have people searching the Vast Expanse for him. If we....”

“It doesn’t matter. We just want his body, we’re not trying to help him awaken!”

The powerful divine sense once again spread out, and the ancient voice spoke, as cold as ice. “Leave him here. Just now, I felt some sort of reaction from the ancestral relic. Keeping it under control makes it difficult for me to divide my attention. Once it has stabilized, I’ll come back to wipe the discarnate soul out of the corpse. Then, we can refine the body using the resources of the Vast Expanse School. After all of its injuries have been healed, and the body is stabilized, then... the fleshly body vessel will be prepared, and we can summon the Ninth Paragon.

“As for the Immortal God Continent and the Devil Realm Continent, they will never be able to find the corpse in here. Besides, even if they knew about it, would they really be willing to start a war with our Vast Expanse School?” The ancient voice was filled with a domineering air, and even as it began to fade away, the other seven Paragons exchanged glances and then began to laugh. Then, they clasped hands and bowed before returning to their various locations of secluded meditation.

Since the Sect Leader himself said he would handle Meng Hao’s corpse, they weren’t worried at all about anything unexpected happening.

After they all left, Meng Hao’s corpse remained there hanging there in midair, still and unmoving.

His soul was hidden within the wick of the bronze lamp that rested inside of him. The little bit he had allowed to emanate to the outside just now had been to attract the attention of the Paragons of the Vast Expanse School. He was making a gamble now, gambling that he wouldn’t be

discovered, that he could use this place to remain concealed from the forces which sought him, and simultaneously, restore his cultivation base.

He also needed to continue to practice cultivation, and seize an opportunity to step into the Daosource Realm as early as possible.

All of those goals were things he hoped to accomplish in the Vast Expanse School.

He would make use of the resources of the Vast Expanse School to heal his injuries, and perhaps even incite the Vast Expanse School into a war with the Immortal God Realm and the Devil Realm. Even if he couldn't pull off a war, he would still need a place with abundant resources to practice cultivation in the way he desired.

Actually, upon awakening, he had little concept of what the Vast Expanse School was. However, when he was on the flying shuttle, he had found that the closer he got, the more his bronze lamp would tremble and even emanate fluctuations that were complementary to Planet Vast Expanse. At that point, Meng Hao had made his decision.

The bronze lamp was mysterious and unfathomable. He wasn't sure exactly where it came from, but he could tell that it definitely had something to do with Planet Vast Expanse.

With his soul hidden in the wick of the lamp, the old man in the violet-gold robe had been unable to detect his presence. However, the powerful divine sense of the Vast Expanse School's Sect Leader left Meng Hao shaken with the threat it posed.

That divine sense was able to inspect every aspect of his body, and had even passed over the location of the bronze lamp several times. However, the lamp itself was something that even the terrifying Sect Leader couldn't detect, which dispelled the lingering feelings of fear Meng Hao had because of the man.

A few days later, that same terrifying divine sense exploded out and enveloped Meng Hao. This time, it studied him for an entire hour, examining him in every aspect. It also completely wiped away the soul fragment that Meng Hao had left outside of the bronze lamp.

In effect, he was murdering Meng Hao; were it not for the bronze lamp, then any chance he had of fully awakening would have been forever erased.

After the hour passed, the divine sense slowly retracted. Meng Hao's corpse was then gripped by a powerful force which pulled it down toward a wide platform, atop which was an enormous cauldron!

It was a medicine cauldron, fully 3,000 meters tall, like a looming mountain. An everburning, seven-colored flame roared beneath it, and inside was a sea of medicine. The powerful force which gripped Meng Hao instantly threw him into the middle of the cauldron.

As that happened, the old man in the violet-gold robes flew over, along with the other six Paragons. They hovered to a stop above the cauldron, then waved their sleeves as they tossed numerous precious medicinal plants inside. In response, the medicinal brew inside began to bubble and boil.

"It has begun," said the ancient voice. "The soul is completely wiped away, leaving the body an empty husk. Heal the wounds and restore the body to a state of perfection, and then we can use it." The seven Paragons had very serious expressions on their faces as they sent out the power of their cultivation base, causing the pores all over Meng Hao's skin to open and begin to absorb the medicinal ingredient extracts.

Rumbling sounds echoed out. Inside the bronze lamp, Meng Hao's soul couldn't feel the burning sensation that existed outside of his body, but he could sense his wounds rapidly healing.

His spirits instantly lifted, and yet he maintained full vigilance.

Time passed. Nineteen days later, so much of the medicinal brew within the huge cauldron had drained away that the cauldron was almost empty. Meng Hao was like a black hole; despite the vast quantity of pure medicinal plants he had absorbed, his injuries were only healed by about thirty percent.

"Simply extraordinary! Not even all those medicinal plants could heal him?"

“It doesn’t matter. The resources of the Vast Expanse School are profound. Virtually limitless! However much he needs to absorb, that’s how much we’ll provide. It just goes to show the incredible potential in this corpse!” The Paragons laughed heartily. Not concerned at all about this development, they went to find more medicinal plants to throw into the cauldron.

Rumbling could be heard as the medicinal brew rose higher within the cauldron once again. Meng Hao was completely submerged. His fleshly body was growing stronger, and the dangerous instabilities caused by being prematurely awoken from the process of absorbing Shui Dongliu’s legacy were slowly being neutralized.

As he remained hidden within the bronze lamp, Meng Hao licked his lips. Although he wasn’t aware of it, a bashful expression had appeared on his face, and he seemed a bit embarrassed.

Another month passed....

“Still not recovered? Ah, it’s fine. Keep providing him materials to absorb!”

“I grew this Heavenrose Grass for 30,000 years. I’ll give it to him. All for the benefit of the Ninth Paragon!”

“Years ago I fought a desperate battle to gain this Cloud Dragon bone.... Ah, whatever. The arrival of the Ninth Paragon is critical for our Vast Expanse School!”

The seven Paragons didn’t seem very happy, but they gritted their teeth and began to produce all sorts of various precious materials from their collections, which they threw into the cauldron to continue the refinement process.

Meng Hao’s body was now almost completely recovered. The dangerous instabilities had been mostly neutralized. However, the bronze lamp which no one could see was like a ravenous black hole when it came to absorbing resources!

In fact, it had absorbed more than half of the various precious materials

so far. That caused its flame to grow brighter and brighter, and gradually, Meng Hao could sense that the bronze lamp itself was awakening!

More and more materials were absorbed, until finally, the entire cauldron was rumbling, and the energy of Heaven and Earth in the area was also sucked in.

“The process is almost complete. The energy of Heaven and Earth is being absorbed. Things will be over soon.”

“We paid a high price, but the result is an incredibly powerful Paragon corpse. It will all be worth it when the Ninth Paragon arrives.”

The seven Paragons were laughing heartily, and looked very much at ease. In recent days, they had been constantly pouring cultivation base power into the cauldron. To finally see an end in sight to all the wastage caused them to sigh in relief.

Time passed. One month. Two months. Three months....

Chapter 1415: Vast Expanse Dao Body!

The starry sky which stretched out over the half planet trembled as boundless energy of Heaven and Earth surged into the enormous cauldron. All seven Patriarchs, including the one in the violet-gold robe, had extremely unsightly expressions on their faces. There was no need to even mention the wastage to their cultivation bases which had occurred over the past three months. Virtually all of the medicinal plants they possessed had already been thrown into the cauldron, and yet Meng Hao's corpse... still hadn't fully recovered.

"A pit! That's not a corpse inside that cauldron, it's a bottomless pit!" Their hearts ached, and yet the Sect Leader, wherever he was in the depths of the land, hadn't spoken a single word about the matter, so it would be bad form for them to stop. Enduring the pain, they continued.

Meng Hao, on the other hand, was more excited than ever. He was like a fish back in water, his injuries fully recovered, the instabilities negated.

And yet, he just couldn't bear to let so much energy of Heaven and Earth go to waste, not to mention all of the legendary medicinal plants, all of which were things that had been extinct in the Mountain and Sea Realm. He was in a constant state of being remoulded; his fleshly body was growing stronger, and his cultivation base was rising.

The bronze lamp was burning brighter than ever as it absorbed the energy of Heaven and Earth, and the valuable, precious materials. As it grew stronger, it in turn helped Meng Hao to grow, causing incredible transformations within him as he grew more powerful.

As the process continued, Meng Hao's body became more and more suitable... to act as the vessel for the bronze lamp!

Before, his body had been most suited to the 33 Soul Lamps, but now, it was transforming in a way that would allow it to wield the power of that one bronze lamp!

That rebuilding process required that his qi passageways be broken down and then reconstructed. Light from the bronze lamp forged new qi

passageways, which spread out to fill him. New blood vessels stretched out, and the pumping of his heart grew stronger. Every part of him was affected, until his body began to shine like a precious gem!

There was even a certain ancient feeling that appeared, as though Meng Hao's body had become a valuable, precious stone from ancient times. There was a chaotic, primeval Dao that seemed to fill him, to permeate every aspect of his flesh and blood, and to swirl around him.

His body seemed more ancient, its aura more primeval, and at the same time, he looked younger!

Even as Meng Hao was being transformed by the bronze lamp, something was happening in the lands below, where the half-planet existed. There could be seen a crimson sea.

It was not blood, but consisted of the condensed power of elemental fire. Within that crimson sea of fire was a huge turtle shell, upon which an old man sat cross-legged.

The turtle shell was like a sealing mark, which was apparently suppressing something that existed underneath the crimson sea of flames. The flames churned, and occasional beams of light would seep up from down below, as though whatever was being sealed underneath was attempting to break free.

The old man's face was pale white as he expended all possible effort to maintain the suppression of the seal. Because of the intensity of his work, he was unable to sense what was happening in the outside world.

He had no idea what had happened recently. The ancestral relic beneath the sea of flames had become active to a degree that far exceeded its activity in the past. In the past, it would occasionally become very animated every once in awhile, but such events would only last for a few days.

In contrast, this time it had remained active for several months!

Up above, Meng Hao continued the absorption process. The ancient air about him grew more prominent, and caused the starry sky above him to

rumble with such intensity that the fluctuations spread out into the rest of Planet Vast Expanse!

The Heavens trembled, and clouds roiled. From a distance, it even looked as if a layer of distorted vortexes had appeared atop Planet Vast Expanse!

The brother-sister duo of Yun Shan and Yun Feng couldn't see these things, but if they could, Yun Feng would likely be reminded of what he had seen back on the flying shuttle!

The only difference was that the flying shuttle was small, whereas Planet Vast Expanse was... huge!

Over the course of the passing months, visiting cultivators on Planet Vast Expanse couldn't help but sense that something strange was happening. That was especially true of the last half month, during which the distorted vortexes appeared outside of the planet. Any who neared them would find their bodies being withered away rapidly. That terrifying fact ensured that few people dared to get close to them.

Even the mist of the Vast Expanse in the area seemed to have been affected, and began to flow ceaselessly. Eventually, the effect stretched out even farther. If it were possible to look down at the Vast Expanse from an extremely high vantage point, then Planet Vast Expanse would look every bit like a black hole.

That black hole was surrounded by a slowly spinning vortex which affected the entire area around it, and grew larger and larger as time went by!

Out in the Vast Expanse were countless bizarre entities who were now trembling. When they cast their gazes in the direction of Planet Vast Expanse, they could sense that something terrifying was slowly awakening there!

Time passed. Two months later, the seven 9-Essences Paragons were on the verge of losing their tempers. They had fully unleashed their cultivation bases, and had produced virtually all of the precious materials they possessed. They were now empty and drained, and yet Meng Hao's body in the cauldron was still withered, although it seemed to have

improved slightly.

“Dammit, what is this thing? How can this corpse absorb such quantities of resources!”

“All of those resources were extremely precious and valuable. How is this even possible!?!?”

“By this point, there’s no point in complaining. We need a big burst of energy to restore the corpse. Otherwise, everything else will have been a huge waste!” The seven Paragons gritted their teeth helplessly. As the saying goes, if you ride a tiger, it’s hard to get off. They produced jade slips and sent various messages. Soon, numerous beams of light appeared from the main areas of the sect as cultivators brought more precious materials to feed into the huge cauldron.

“This is Dragonleaf Shoot.... We only have 350 grams of it in the entire sect!”

“Why did you even bring this Pinegod Cone here? It’s... it’s... alright, fine!” The seven Paragons felt their hearts twinge with pain; it had only taken a short six months or so for the precious materials they had spent countless years gathering for the sect, to disappear into the cauldron.

The cauldron thrummed, and inside, Meng Hao’s body was actually reverting from its withered state. However, he was continuously suppressing those effects. In some ways, he was feeling a lot of pressure himself.

His fleshly body was getting stronger, and his cultivation base was rising. Gradually, everything began to stabilize. Within the precious materials were some things that could be categorized as Essences of all living things. When those items merged into Meng Hao’s forehead, the Hex marks there gradually filled with more Essence power.

His body was being completely remoulded, completely transformed!

Surprised, Meng Hao let out a sigh. “I can’t keep this up much longer.... Those guys are crazy! They’re throwing so much stuff in that even the bronze lamp can’t absorb it quickly enough.”

More time passed, a half month. Outside of the cauldron, the seven Paragons' hearts raged with flames of fury. The resources of the Vast Expanse School were drawn upon once more. By this point, the energy of Heaven and Earth in the starry sky was showing signs of being dried up. The seven Paragons couldn't take it any longer.

"Dammit! I give up! I'm gonna drag that corpse out and cut it open to find out what's going on!"

"This is no cultivator, and definitely not Meng Hao! I checked into Meng Hao earlier, and he's a cultivator. What we have here is some all-consuming beast!"

"I quit!!" The seven Paragons couldn't hold back their rage any longer, and shot toward the huge cauldron. Before they could get close, though, the cauldron itself began to emanate thunderous rumbling sounds. The energy of Heaven and Earth ceased moving toward it, and the medicinal brew suddenly went completely still.

Then, Meng Hao slowly rose up from within the shaking cauldron, to hover there in midair. He emanated shocking pressure that filled the entire planet, and spread out even further, causing the starry sky above Planet Vast Expanse to flash with strange colors.

It was at this point that the distortions which surrounded Planet Vast Expanse spread far and wide. Rumbling sounds could be heard as the mist in the boundless vortex was affected in numerous regions.

Countless living beings cried out and began to shake as looks of terror spread out on their faces. There were even certain ancient entities which not even the Vast Expanse School would dare to provoke, who were awoken from sleep, with looks of astonishment on their faces.

"Vast Expanse... Dao Body...."

Rumbling sounds filled the entire Vast Expanse, as it was filled by a gargantuan, indescribable vortex. Several shocking auras rose up from the Immortal God Continent, which looked off into the distance with somberness and shock.

The same thing happened on the Devil Realm Continent, in which several streams of divine sense looked off into the distance in disbelief.

Within the Green Coffin Vortex, the butterfly's wings fluttered as a bit of the mist of the Vast Expanse entered into the world of the butterfly, and could be sensed by many.

On the peak of the tallest mountain, tears streamed down Xu Qing's cheeks, and she smiled.

"I just sensed it.... You're out there...."

As the shocking events played out in the Vast Expanse, back above the half planet inside Planet Vast Expanse, Meng Hao floated there, the center of all attention among the surrounding disciples of the Vast Expanse School.

A fragrant aroma even spread out from him, and his body truly looked as if it had been moulded from precious gems. His facial features were the same, but in terms of his overall appearance, it was vastly different.

Anyone who looked at him would be shaken, as if they had just laid eyes on the most perfect treasure in existence!

As for the seven 9-Essences Paragons, they stepped forward, their eyes glowing with strange light as they examined Meng Hao.

Chapter 1416: Welcoming Light!

Meng Hao's current physical appearance was difficult to put into words. It was matchlessly scintillating, and as he hung there above the enormous cauldron, dazzling, jewel-like light spread out that seemed capable of outshining all other gems or treasures.

Shocking fluctuations spread out in all directions from him, which caused even more vortexes to appear outside in the Vast Expanse.

As of this moment, the old man in the violet-gold robe, as well as the other six Paragons, were gasping. They couldn't help but stare at what had sucked away the better part of a year, as well as countless precious materials from the sect and even their own cultivation base power. What had been moulded... was a Heaven-shaking, Earth-shattering fleshly body.

It was at this point that, deep in the lands down below, the old man on top of the turtle shell finally opened his eyes. The sea of flames had finally calmed down; whatever it was that had agitated the ancestral relic inside of the sea of flames had finally vanished.

The old man looked exhausted, but when he sent his divine sense out and saw Meng Hao, his jaw dropped, and his eyes began to shine.

"Vast Expanse... Dao Body!!" he murmured in disbelief.

He wasn't the only shocked one. The other seven Paragons were equally astonished as they sensed Meng Hao's treasure-like body, and as they studied the fluctuations emanating off of him, they quickly realized what it all signified.

"Vast Expanse Dao Body!!"

Gasps rang out, along with expressions revealing mixed emotions. There were even some within whose eyes appeared glints of greed.

Considering that 9-Essences Paragons were feeling greedy, it was easy to see how rare a Vast Expanse Dao Body was!

Of course, this Dao Body was actually not referring to a specific type of fleshly body, but was more a general classification!

Any fleshly body with the right qualifications and potential, after reaching a certain point, would incite changes in the Vast Expanse that the Vast Expanse itself had to suppress. At that time, it could be called a Vast Expanse Dao Body.

The seven Paragons' eyes were glittering, and all the lands around them were trembling. The old man on the turtle shell sent his divine sense out to form a clone, which, as soon as it appeared, caused the other seven Paragons to bury their feelings.

The divine sense clone wore a long white robe, and looked exactly like the old man back on the turtle shell. As he stood there studying Meng Hao, he raised his right hand and touched the corpse's forehead. At that point, boundless divine sense exploded out into Meng Hao.

This time, he spent even more time examining him than last time. An hour later, he lowered his hand. He had just used all of the divine sense power he could muster to thoroughly inspect Meng Hao inside and out, to confirm that there was no trace of a soul inside. Feeling a bit more relaxed, he turned to look at the other seven Paragons.

"You people don't want to Transcend?!" he asked, a stern gleam in his eyes. His voice wasn't loud, but it contained a shocking pressure that spread out in all directions, causing the other Paragons to sink further into silence.

"Even I can't help but covet this Vast Expanse Dao Body. I might not be able to possess it, but I could turn it into a puppet that would be an extremely helpful asset, to say the least.

"But would that be worth forsaking Transcendence?!"

"Our Vast Expanse School is an offshoot of the Vast Expanse Society. And what is our purpose in this starry sky? !?! Have you forgotten?! 1

"Within the necropolis of the first generation Patriarch of the Vast Expanse is the method for Transcendence. That is the mission of the Vast Expanse School!

"After all of these years and years of searching, we've finally found hope.

Now all we need is for the main sect on the outside to send Paragon Heaven-Eye down to us. Supposedly, he only recently stepped into the 9-Essences level, but he has a Dao eye. This Vast Expanse Dao Body was prepared expressly for him, and will play a vital function in the overall plan!

“If we can find the secret of Transcendence inside the Patriarch’s necropolis, then all of us will have the same hope to Transcend. The Vast Expanse Society on the outside, the main sect, is not easy to get into, but if we Transcend, then we will be able to leave the Vast Expanse at any time. When that happens, we will definitely have extremely high positions within the Vast Expanse Society!

“When you compare Transcendence to a piddling Vast Expanse Dao Body, I don’t even need to explain which is more important!” He swished his sleeve, causing Meng Hao’s body to fly out to the central region of the half planet, where... nine primitive-looking altars rose high into the sky.

Meng Hao’s corpse came to rest on the ninth of those altars, where it lay unmoving.

“Make preparations! Contact the Vast Expanse Society on the outside. In three days, we will prepare to receive the Ninth Paragon!” With that, the old man’s clone body vanished. Everything was very quiet, and the old man in the violet-gold robe took a deep breath.

“The Sect Leader is right. After all these years of preparations, and all of the waiting, when hope for Transcendence is finally right in front of us... a Vast Expanse Dao Body is not even worth thinking about!” Sighing, he clasped hands to the others and then walked away.

The others remained silent for a moment, but soon wry smiles appeared on their faces. Shaking their heads, they suppressed the greed they felt for the Vast Expanse Dao Body, and returned one by one to their secluded meditation, where they had three days to restore their cultivation bases back to their peak.

Those three days passed by in a flash. The starry sky outside of Planet Vast Expanse had returned to normal, the majestic vortexes had faded

away, and the visiting cultivators returned to their normal affairs. However, the strange signs and portents which had occurred were firmly fixed into the minds of all. For those people, no amount of investigation or inquiry revealed any clues about what had happened.

After the third day, eight beams of light shot through the air of the half-planet toward the nine altars. In the lead was the Vast Expanse School's Sect Leader. Usually, his time was occupied suppressing what was underneath the sea of flames, and he rarely came out. But now, he was here with his true self, which sat down cross-legged on the first altar.

The other seven Patriarchs, including the old man in the violet-gold robe, landed on the various platforms, then performed double-handed incantation gestures as they rotated their cultivation bases.

Simultaneously, innumerable Vast Expanse School disciples appeared in their location on the half-planet. As they sat down cross-legged, they appeared to be organized into an enormous spell formation. Furthermore, countless asteroids outside of the planet itself were also meticulously organized, causing flickering light to radiate out, and the starlight to fill with dense energy of Heaven and Earth.

Even more Vast Expanse School disciples were visible elsewhere on Planet Vast Expanse, sitting in meditation at the behest of the sect itself. Gradually, the auras of all of the disciples merged together into a whole.

On this day, all cultivators on Planet Vast Expanse who were not members of the Vast Expanse School were prohibited from flying in the air. Any violators would be executed immediately without question.

On this day, Planet Vast Expanse was locked down. No one was allowed to enter!

On this day, all of Planet Vast Expanse thrummed with energy, and rumbling sounds emanated out from it into the starry sky.

Furthermore, a beam of light shot out from the inner part of Planet Vast Expanse, from the turtle shell atop the sea of flames in the half-planet!

According to rumors, the Vast Expanse School had a teleportation portal

which connected to outside of the Vast Expanse. In some ways that was true, and in some ways that was false. What was true was that there really was a spell formation. The false part was that... only a Transcendent cultivator could use that teleportation portal to leave!

However, to do that, a Transcendent cultivator wouldn't actually need the aid of such a spell formation.

The true purpose of the teleportation portal was to receive people from the outside, to lock down a position for such people, to transport souls!

This connection between the inside and the outside of the Vast Expanse enabled powerful experts from the outside to send a soul body inside. It was too difficult for a fleshly body to survive the process. It would be destroyed in order to keep the soul body whole and safe as it entered the Vast Expanse.

The cost to operate the teleportation portal was astronomical. Furthermore, both the Vast Expanse School on the inside and the Vast Expanse Society on the outside had to pay a huge price.

Because of the huge cost, it took eras and eras of preparation. In fact, throughout all the years of the Vast Expanse School's existence, it had only been used a few times.

Amidst rumbling sounds, brilliant light rocketed off of the turtle shell in the sea of flames. It pierced through the lands to appear outside of the half-planet, amongst the nine altars. The altars absorbed the light, and then eight of the people atop the altars unleashed their cultivation bases, adding to the teleportation power.

Meng Hao lay on the ninth altar. From within the bronze lamp, his soul looked out coldly at what was happening. He knew that this would be the final test. If he could pass it safely, then from now on, he would be the Ninth Paragon of the Vast Expanse School.

Not only would he have a new identity, he would gain the protection of the Vast Expanse School. That was critical as far as he was concerned.

"I'll exterminate this incoming soul, and when I open my eyes, I will be

Meng Hao, and also... the Vast Expanse School's Ninth Paragon." He examined the bronze lamp that he was hiding in, and smiled. This mysterious and powerful lamp was the main reason why he was so confident in this gamble.

"I have no deep enmity toward you people. If you want to assign blame, then you should blame... yourselves for trying to possess my body!" His eyes flickered as he sank further into the bronze lamp and waited... for his enemy to arrive.

The ninth altar flickered with bright light that converged into a pillar which shot up off of the half-planet and into the inner starry sky. At the same time, the half-planet began to move in rotation, and the asteroids which filled the starry sky began to emanate dazzling light.

Countless voices could be heard chanting scriptures, which emanated off of the half-planet; at the same time, the pillar of light appeared above the lands of Planet Vast Expanse.

The sound of the chanting scriptures bolstered the light; the lands of Planet Vast Expanse were shaking, and the mountains were trembling. The sea of flames became still as the light shot out into the starry sky of the Vast Expanse, rising higher and higher until no one could see it.

At that point, everyone on Planet Vast Expanse began to tremble. Countless life forms bowed their heads, and looks of intense focus appeared in the eyes of the disciples of the Vast Expanse School. As for all the other cultivators, they were completely shaken.

Everyone was now waiting!

Meng Hao's soul remained in the bronze lamp, eyes shining with a mysterious, incisive light!

"The critical moment has arrived. If I succeed, I can settle down in the Vast Expanse School, and will have a greater hope of getting my revenge. If I fail....

"I won't fail! Even though the Sect Leader of the Vast Expanse School most likely still has suspicions about my soul, I... won't fail!" Within Meng

Hao's eyes, a red, Demonic glow could be seen!

*

1. The Vast Expanse Society was actually mentioned in chapter 1408 by the parrot.

Chapter 1417: Who Cares If You Know!?

In the same moment that the pillar of light rose up off of the planet and out into the Vast Expanse, there were three areas on Planet Vast Expanse itself where heart-pounding fluctuations were emanating out.

The first location was a garden that looked like a celestial paradise. In one particular valley was a lake, next to which a young man sat cross-legged, wearing a long golden robe. He looked up, and as he did, his previously ordinary pupils suddenly distorted into oval shapes.

“Yet again someone descends. Is it really so easy for these kids of the younger generation to find the Patriarch’s necropolis?!”

“If the method for Transcendence were so simple, then after all these countless years, wouldn’t there be more than just four or five people who have succeeded?”

The second location was far, far away from the first. It was an ice cave, filled with fluttering snow. A woman stood there silently, looking up into the Heavens, and the pillar of light. Her eyes seemed to contain reminiscence, as well as other mixed emotions. After a moment, it all transformed into a light sigh.

“I have no desire to search for the Patriarch’s necropolis, nor to Transcend. I only wish... to return home.”

Gradually, the woman disappeared behind the masses of snowflakes.

Coincidentally, the third location was almost the opposite of the second. It was a scorching desert, where a violet sandstorm raged. If one looked closely, it would be possible to make out the vague image of a person walking through that sandstorm.

When the pillar of light rose up, that person looked up, and then began to cackle shrilly.

“Ah, another. I wonder who it is this time?”

The lands of Planet Vast Expanse quaked as the pillar of light sent wild ripples out into the sky. It was hard to say whether or not it was because

of Meng Hao's Vast Expanse Dao Body, but many beings within the Vast Expanse were now paying close attention to what was happening.

It was at this point that a figure suddenly appeared within the pillar of light. It was a discarnate soul whose fleshly body was crumbling around it. Apparently, the soul was struggling to make its way down.

Apparently there were invisible barriers blocking its way, and as the soul descended, it began to disperse. However, in the very center of the soul was a violet eye, which emanated an air of madness, and continued to follow the pillar of light toward Planet Vast Expanse!

During the process, more of the soul dispersed, but at the same time, it increased its speed. Gradually, thunderous booms began to echo out from within the pillar of light.

Soon the soul was quite close to Planet Vast Expanse. However, at that point it seemed to run into some incredibly powerful obstacle, and the soul began to fully disperse. An unyielding roar echoed out, and then, eight figures appeared in the area surrounding the soul.

Closer inspection would reveal that those eight figures were none other than the Sect Leader and the other seven 9-Essences Paragons. They unleashed massive power to break the barrier down, causing the violet eye to gleam with excitement as they then escorted it down toward Planet Vast Expanse.

They moved with incredible speed, destroying any and all barriers which appeared. By the time the group actually reached Planet Vast Expanse, the soul had dispersed, leaving behind nothing but the eye.

The eye radiated madness, but also pain. It was covered with countless cracks and crevices, and was hovering on the verge of collapse. Apparently, the other eight Paragons could do nothing about that other than increase their speed and usher the eye toward the fleshly body they had prepared for it.

At the same time, the cultivators on Planet Vast Expanse saw what was happening, and their minds were filled with utter shock.

The sounds of scriptures being chanted by the cultivators of the Vast Expanse School seemed to contain a strange power which filled the area, which fused into the pillar of light and helped the eye to resist the collapse.

Rumbling echoed out as the violet eye reached Planet Vast Expanse, passed down through the lands into the inner planet, and then appeared in the air above the ninth altar, where Meng Hao lay stretched out.

By this point, the eye was almost completely covered with cracks, and seemed as if it might collapse at any moment. However, it was in that very moment that it slammed into Meng Hao's forehead and began to bore into him.

When the eye finally merged into Meng Hao, the Paragons on the other eight altars all reacted in the same way.

"Success!!" they cried, opening their eyes and laughing coldly.

The only one who didn't respond in that way was the Sect Leader, who snorted coldly as his eyes opened.

"Fellow Daoists," he said coolly, "activate the Soulseal Formation. Help the Ninth Paragon suppress the discarnate soul in that body!" He waved his hand and then pointed toward Meng Hao laying there on the ninth altar.

The other seven Paragons didn't seem surprised at all by the Sect Leader's command, almost as if they had been prepared for this. Chuckling coldly, they simultaneously unleashed cultivation base power, sending ripples out in all directions. With the Sect Leader taking the lead, they combined their power to form a sealing mark which descended onto Meng Hao.

Inside the bronze lamp, Meng Hao's soul had been preparing to attack the violet eye as soon as it entered. But then his face fell, and he looked around to find a barrier trapping his soul and preventing it from emerging.

It was at this point that the Sect Leader began to speak.

“Fellow Daoist, I don’t care who you are, but it’s safe to assume you’re Meng Hao from the Mountain and Sea Realm. Although I can’t tell where your discarnate soul is hiding, nor do I have any proof of its actual existence...

“I still believe that your arrival was far too coincidental!

“You just so happened to come in the exact moment when we needed a corpse?

“Perhaps it really was a coincidence. Perhaps it was even a coincidence that you consumed a vast amount of precious materials belonging to the Vast Expanse School. However, it strikes me that there’s too little of your soul left, and it put up too little of a struggle. This, of course, might just be a coincidence due to the severe injuries you sustained, which caused you to be so weak.

“It’s possible that you heard my discussions with my fellow sect members here, and that was why you never revealed any traces of your presence. Of course, there is another possibility, and that is that your soul truly has dispersed in all aspects.

“However, the presence of so many coincidences all at the same time is too suspicious. Perhaps I’m being a bit paranoid, but I believe that there is a high likelihood that your soul has not, in fact, dispersed!

“You have been waiting for this very moment to wipe out the Vast Expanse School’s Ninth Paragon, and take his place!

“Therefore, we came prepared. That ninth altar you are on also serves as a suppressor of souls, and is effective on any soul that does not cultivate the magic of the Vast Expanse School!

“Regardless of whether or not you are still there inside your body, and regardless of whether or not I’m paranoid, now that the seal has been activated, I can rest at ease.” As the old Sect Leader’s voice echoed out, the combined effort of the eight Paragons caused the power of the Soulseal Formation to crush down. That in turn allowed the violet eye to take root inside of Meng Hao, to spread tendril-like soul strands throughout his body.

At the same time, a violet mark could be seen on his forehead. It began to open up, taking control of everything, revealing... a violet eye!

Almost as soon as it appeared, a fierce gleam could be seen in the eye. Then, it closed, and even more soul strands went into Meng Hao, filling his qi passageways, his heart, his mind, his everything.

Inside the bronze lamp, Meng Hao's soul frowned. He watched coldly as all of this happened, and could feel the effects of the soul sealing carried out by the Sect Leader and the others.

"So, they were ready for me," he thought, eyes flickering. However, he didn't seem very surprised. After all, people who practiced cultivation all the way to the 9-Essences level were sure to be extraordinary in terms of wisdom and foresight.

"Well, in that case... I'll just have to go with my backup plan. If it turns out I can't erase this other soul, then I'll... consume it!"

Meng Hao's eyes glittered as the bronze lamp suddenly flared with light and then... a crack opened up on its surface. In the instant that the crack appeared, the soul strands of the Ninth Paragon tried to force their way in. Meanwhile, the faces of the Sect Leader and the other Paragons flickered.

Although they had had their suspicions, they hadn't dared to make a determination as to whether or not Meng Hao was truly still in his body. After all, the most rigorous inspections hadn't turned up the slightest evidence of that.

But now that the bronze lamp had opened up a bit, and the soul strands of the Ninth Paragon shot toward it, the eight Paragons could sense what was happening.

"So, he really is still around!" Cold, grim expressions appeared on their faces, and they sent their divine sense pouring toward Meng Hao's body to help the Ninth Paragon suppress Meng Hao's soul.

However, before their streams of divine sense could enter Meng Hao's body, the bronze lamp flashed, and a power of expulsion erupted out, blocking the eight streams of divine sense outside of the body!

Their faces fell. As for Meng Hao, he now had a bit of extra time. His soul unhesitatingly shot out toward the soul strands belonging to the Ninth Paragon. Instantly, the two intertwined, and began to try to consume each other.

At the same time, Meng Hao's Demonic qi erupted out, and his soul transformed. The multifariousness of the Demon caused his own soul to be indistinguishably mixed with the soul strands. That in turn caused his ability to consume them to increase dramatically!

The soul strands could sense the incredible danger, and tried to fight back. However, it was impossible to tell which were which!

The Sect Leader and the other eight Paragons had grim faces as they looked on. They could sense that the souls of Meng Hao and the Ninth Paragon were intermixed, but there was nothing they could do to intervene.

“How could this be happening!?!?”

“Dammit!!” Gleams of rage appeared in their eyes. The Sect Leader looked extremely grim, and yet, couldn't help but sigh with a bit of admiration.

“No wonder this Meng Hao was able to tangle with the Immortal God Continent and the Devil Realm.... He used his own body as bait for our Vast Expanse School. He set up a sinister scheme, and even anticipated that he would be discovered by us. I was simply too self-confident.

“This is a battle between souls, and one will end up consuming the other. We cannot interfere. Victory will be decided by which among their souls is the strongest.”

Chapter 1418: Ninth Paragon!

The Sect Leader of the Vast Expanse School, along with the seven other Paragons, were all sitting cross-legged on the altars, looking very grim-faced.

Although they couldn't directly help the Ninth Paragon, the Soulseal Formation was still in place, exerting pressure onto Meng Hao's soul.

Because the formation only targeted cultivators who did not cultivate the magic of the Vast Expanse School, it was the most effective tool at their disposal. Unfortunately for them, when they tried to send their divine sense into Meng Hao, a powerful force rebuffed them. That only served to make Meng Hao seem more mystifying to them.

Of course, it was all because of the bronze lamp. Furthermore, it forced them to rely only on the general sensation they felt to understand what was happening. They couldn't directly observe. When you added in Meng Hao's multifarious Demonic qi, it meant that what they sensed was often wrong.

Plus there was the fact that they couldn't even tell exactly where Meng Hao's soul was hiding, which made it difficult for them to judge exactly how effective the Soulseal Formation was.

It was just as the Sect Leader had said: everything would come down to who was stronger: Meng Hao, or the Ninth Paragon.

One of them had shocking natural talent, and had relied on his own cultivation base to become a 9-Essences Paragon in the Vast Expanse Society. He even possessed a Dao eye, which could cause shocking transformations in Heaven and Earth. The other had been propelled to the 9-Essences level via legacy, and yet regardless of whether it was in terms of his status or his background, he had reached the pinnacle of his home Realm. He had experienced countless dangers, had watched his world be destroyed, and had battled with both the Immortal God Continent and the Devil Realm Continent.

As for which one of these two souls was stronger... the Sect Leader and

the other Paragons had no way to say for sure.

They could only wait.

Days passed one by one. Soon, half a month had gone by.

From the outside, there didn't seem to be anything special about Meng Hao. However, inside, a vicious battle was being fought with the soul of the Ninth Paragon. The bronze lamp ensured that the effects of the Soulseal Formation were blocked, allowing Meng Hao to fight with complete viciousness, a viciousness that the Ninth Paragon couldn't even come close to matching.

Even more important was that Meng Hao's soul was backed by his Demonic qi. Its maddening, multifarious nature was completely terrifying, and was a constant pressure on the Ninth Paragon.

"Dammit. Dammit!!" the Ninth Patriarch howled, although the sound was confined within the body. How could he ever have imagined that something like this would happen immediately upon his arrival?

All of his grand aspirations, his wild ambitions, his complex machinations, and even his dream of Transcendence, were now being utterly shaken. In fact, he was even able to sense that his consciousness was starting to fade.

Gradually, he had to admit that when it came to this battle of mutual consumption... he was not a match for Meng Hao!

He wallowed in his bitterness as time passed. Meng Hao's soul now controlled more than half of his body. In contrast, the Ninth Paragon was only growing weaker and weaker. Eventually, it reached the point where he was on the verge of being completely consumed.

"Give me a chance to live!" he wailed. "There is no enmity between us!!" Shaken, he refused to accept the idea of dying in this way.

In almost the same moment that his words echoed out, Meng Hao's soul paused for a moment, then swallowed what remained of the Ninth Paragon's soul, leaving behind only a tiny strand, like a flickering spark.

“You’re right, there is no enmity between us,” Meng Hao said coolly. “I won’t kill you. I’ll leave you with this tiny soul seed. One day in the future, I’ll give you your freedom!” Even as his voice echoed out, memories and Daoist magics belonging to the Ninth Paragon exploded out within his soul.

The power of his soul increased with maddening rapidity. In the blink of an eye, it broke past its previous limit. After all, consuming the soul of a 9-Essences Paragon counted as incredible good fortune. Although it didn’t quite match up to what had happened with Shui Dongliu, it came close!!

It was possible to imagine that, once Meng Hao regained complete control over himself, with his Vast Expanse Dao Body and increased soul power, then his battle prowess would exceed that of an ordinary 9-Essences Paragon. He wouldn’t quite be at the peak, but he would definitely be in the mid 9-Essences level!

Meanwhile, the eight Paragons were still there on the altars, staring at Meng Hao with looks of vigilance and hesitation on their faces.

After half a month of observation, they could tell that there was no longer any chaos within Meng Hao. Clearly, one of the souls had consumed the other!

Furthermore, the soul which had emerged as the winner was now much more powerful!

“Which one of them was victorious?” said the old man in the violet-gold robe, his voice soft. The others were unwilling to offer any speculation.

“The Soulseal Formation isn’t doing anything now. The Ninth Paragon must have succeeded....”

“If he did, then the Soulseal Formation would automatically cease to have any effect. However, if Meng Hao succeeded, and absorbed the Ninth Paragon’s soul, then he would also become equipped with the characteristics of Vast Expanse techniques, and the result could possibly be the same.”

Even as everyone hesitated, the Sect Leader’s eyes glittered. “We’ll know

the answer soon enough!”

Killing intent swirled in his eyes, and deep inside, he sighed. As soon as he had laid eyes on Meng Hao, he had come up with the idea of using his corpse instead of the other 8-Essences Paragon corpse they had prepared. After all, a 9-Essences corpse would ensure that the Ninth Paragon’s Dao eye would retain the majority of its power.

Then the Vast Expanse Dao Body had appeared, and he was even more convinced to go through with his plan. Even though there was something suspicious about the corpse, he was confident that they could handle the situation.

Actually, if it hadn’t been for the bronze lamp, the entire sequence of events would have been within his complete control.

Killing intent swirled amongst the other Paragons. If it turned out that the Ninth Paragon’s soul had been consumed in front of their very eyes, the sheer magnitude of such an affront would cause their desire to kill Meng Hao to grow even more intense.

The same thought was running through all of their minds. “I truly hope that the Ninth Paragon was victorious!”

As the eight Paragons looked on silently, Meng Hao continued on with the process of fully assimilating the soul. He saw the Ninth Paragon’s life, his techniques, his Dao eye, and his memories. However, he saw nothing regarding the world beyond the Vast Expanse. It was almost as if all information regarding the outside had been sealed, and though Meng Hao could sense its existence, he had no way of unlocking and viewing it.

However, he was made aware of the Vast Expanse School’s plans regarding the necropolis. Not a bit of that information was withheld.

Time passed. The consumption and absorption process took an entire month. Afterward, when Meng Hao had fully assimilated the Ninth Paragon’s soul, he unleashed his own soul to completely fill his body.

As that happened, he was flooded with the sensation of being able to control his own body again. His heartbeat was no longer slow and

monotonous, but thrummed with life and energy, and his qi and blood flowed more and more quickly. Furthermore, his aura ceased emanating out, but was contained inside of him.

However, this indicated that Meng Hao's battle prowess was completely different from before, and the pressure experienced by the other eight Paragons was now even more intense.

The Sect Leader and the other Paragons all kept their eyes fixed fully on Meng Hao. They knew that the answer to their question would soon be revealed.

One breath of time passed. Then another, and another....

Meng Hao's finger twitched, and his eyelids trembled. After ten breaths of time passed, he had gathered enough strength that... his eyes opened!

When that happened, the surrounding eight Paragons all unleashed their power. A shapeless tempest sprang up, transforming into a power of extermination that could be sent crushing down onto Meng Hao at a moment's notice.

However, Meng Hao's expression didn't even flicker. He opened his eyes and looked up at the starry sky, blankly at first, but then with more and more lucidity.

His mind filled with countless memories of the Mountain and Sea Realm, ending with the destruction of the Realm itself. He remembered the Mountain and Sea Butterfly fluttering toward the green coffin. He remembered the parrot wiping its mind.

Meng Hao saw all of that, and then buried it deep within him. What could be seen on his face now made him look very different from before. There was no smile, and no warmth. There was only... icy coldness.

His entire person was like a block of ice!

He seemed completely ambivalent toward the storm of killing intent around him as he slowly rose to a sitting position, looking around coldly at the other Paragons.

The Paragons had been paying very close attention to everything about Meng Hao. They noticed the blankness in his eyes, and then saw them turn lucid. They could tell that he was reminiscing about the past, and they could see how cold he had become.

However, none of those things told them much. If the awakened soul was Meng Hao, it would make sense for him to look blank, then lucid, then recall memories, then turn icy cold.

However, if it was the Ninth Paragon, it would have been the same. He would have looked blankly around at the new world, then grown lucid as he realized where he was. No doubt, he would recall memories of his time outside the Vast Expanse, as well as the fight between himself and Meng Hao. In the end, he would look around at these Paragons who had dragged him into an almost fatal ambush, and of course his expression would be icy!

“Who are you?!” asked the Sect Leader. In addition to the killing intent, other mixed emotions could be seen in his eyes. Even now that Meng Hao was awake... he wasn't sure who he was.

Meng Hao turned, eyes icy as he stared at the Sect Leader. “Who do you think I am?”

Their gazes met, and the Sect Leader's eyes began to glow as his divine sense surged into a mighty, crushing force.

“You're Meng Hao!!” In response to his words, the other Paragons' faces flickered, and their killing intent surged, becoming corporeal as it bore down destructively on Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever as he faced the combined killing intent of eight Paragons. Suddenly, a flash of light could be seen on his forehead, a violet streak that opened up to reveal an eye!

It was none other than the Ninth Paragon's Dao eye!

When the Dao eye opened, everything in the entire world went still. A consummate pressure radiated out, allowing him to stand up to the combined killing intent of all of his opponents.

In response, their faces flickered. Simultaneously, Meng Hao rose to his feet, and as he did, wild colors flashed in the sky and a huge wind kicked up.

It was as if a primordial and ancient will were awakening!

“I’m the Ninth Paragon!” he said, his voice booming like thunder.

The Sect Leader’s eyes flickered as he examined the Dao eye. Inwardly, he sighed and buried his suspicions deep within his heart. Suddenly, he laughed.

“Ah, you truly are the Ninth Paragon of our Vast Expanse School!” The other Paragons looked on silently. Mixed emotions could be seen in their eyes as they looked at the Dao eye, but after a moment, they also began to laugh.

“Welcome, Ninth Paragon. Welcome to the Vast Expanse!”

Who you really are doesn’t matter. As long as you have that Dao eye, and can wield its power... then you are the Ninth Paragon!

Chapter 1419: Putting Down Roots!

Whether or not he was really the Ninth Paragon didn't matter. The Sect Leader of the Vast Expanse School, as well as the other 9-Essences Paragons, had never actually met the Ninth Paragon, so naturally, there were no feelings of friendship between them.

The only reason they needed him was to help with their plan. Furthermore, the most important thing was the Dao eye, which would be of incredible usefulness to them.

That was why they had hoped that the incoming Ninth Paragon would be even stronger in terms of cultivation base.

Now, regardless of whether or not the person they were looking at was Meng Hao or the Ninth Paragon, he had the Dao eye. With that, nothing else really mattered.

If he was the Ninth Paragon, then things were well and good. If he wasn't, then he would have to act like him!

The Sect Leader knew that, and thus he sighed. The other 9-Essences Paragons also knew, and so reacted with mixed feelings.

Meng Hao was aware of that fact as well. That was why he hadn't been surprised at all by the killing intent he saw when he opened his eyes. And that was also why he had opened the Dao eye on his forehead.

When that Dao eye appeared, all danger faded away!

Believe me? Fine! Don't want to believe me...? You have no choice!

As he stood there on the ninth altar, looking at the Sect Leader and the other Paragons, he smiled. It was a warm smile, devoid of the coldness from earlier. Then he clasped hands and bowed to the others.

"Many thanks to you, Fellow Daoists. I will do my best to help with the Vast Expanse School's plan." His smile and his words spoke to his current attitude.

In response, the Sect Leader's eyes flickered, and he laughed again.

“Come, come, you’ve just arrived, and therefore don’t know much about our Vast Expanse School. Allow me to introduce everyone.”

With that, the Sect Leader jovially introduced the other seven Paragons.

One of them was the old man in the violet-gold robe who had purchased Meng Hao’s corpse. His name was Shangguan Hong, and as he smiled and clasped hands to Meng Hao, a profound gleam could be seen in his eyes. 1

Meng Hao smiled broadly in return, and seemed to have missed the look in the man’s eyes. After all the formal greetings were done, the Sect Leader arranged for Meng Hao to be escorted to the temple on the half-planet which had been arranged ahead of time for the Ninth Paragon.

After Meng Hao left, the smiles on the faces of the Sect Leader and the other 9-Essences Paragons turned grim. They remained standing on the altars, silently watching Meng Hao disappear into the distance.

After a long moment passed, Shangguan Hong cleared his throat and said, “Well... that’s it?”

Complex expressions could be seen on the faces of the others.

“There’s no evidence. No way to prove whether or not he really is the Ninth Paragon....”

“Not necessarily. But what would be the point in it? Whether he is or isn’t doesn’t matter. If he’s not, and prefers to maintain a cover, it doesn’t hurt us. If we expose him as a fraud, though, it could harm our own interests.”

“Hmph. I can’t believe we wasted all those resources to end up like this. Maybe we should contact the Vast Expanse Society and have someone else sent down....”

“We spent far too many years accumulating all of those resources. It’s not possible to rebuild the collection any time soon. Besides, if the Vast Expanse Society learned of this matter, who knows how they might deal with us.”

After a bit of discussion, everyone quieted down and looked over at the

Sect Leader.

He closed his eyes for a few moments, and when they opened, they were shining brightly.

“As long as he helps us carry out the plan, then it doesn’t matter who he is, he counts as the Ninth Paragon. Going forward, keep this matter between us.” Having finished speaking, he turned and headed back to the turtle shell above the sea of flames to continue his watch.

After he left, he left single sentence floating behind him. “Notify the sect, spread word, and prepare for the ceremony to officially welcome the Ninth Paragon.”

The other seven Paragons exchanged faint smiles. Strange gleams were buried deep in their eyes. Even after meeting Meng Hao and measuring him up, none of them felt any hatred toward him, or desire to kill him. In fact, they even admired him a bit.

“The ultimate figure of an entire Realm, someone who has tangled with both the Immortal God Realm and the Devil Realm. If he was able to make a comeback after dying... then he can’t be underestimated, nor should he be provoked.”

“How crafty and vicious. And also decisive. If he had made the slightest mistake, a huge battle would have erupted.”

“And yet he managed to hit the nail on the head with that Dao eye. In the end, he basically put himself in an unassailable position.”

“You all might think he is Meng Hao, but in my opinion, the Ninth Paragon would have done just the same.” Some of the Paragons sighed, and others smiled. After exchanging a few more words, they dispersed.

Everything slowly went back to normal in the starry sky of the half-planet.

**

A Vast Expanse School disciple respectfully led Meng Hao to the palace which had been set aside for the Ninth Paragon.

The palace encompassed an area of 300,000 meters, taking up almost an entire plain on the north side of the half-planet. It even had special secluded meditation facilities just for the Ninth patriarch. At first glance, it looked like a vast city.

It was spectacular to behold, complete with mountains, rivers, numerous lakes, and countless buildings. It was like a celestial garden, and at the very center was a towering pagoda, beneath which was an austere temple.

The pagoda was so high it seemed to touch the clouds. From a distance, it was possible to see that there were nine cities like this on the half-planet, which of course corresponded to the nine Paragons of the Vast Expanse School.

Just outside of the city was a placard with calligraphy as flamboyant as dancing dragons and swirling phoenixes.

Ninth Paragon.

This was where Meng Hao was to live. The city was inhabited by 100,000 disciples who served as his guard force. Among their number were three Imperial Lords, seven Dao Sovereigns, dozens of Dao Lords, and over a hundred ordinary Dao Realm experts. The rest were either in the Ancient or Immortal realms.

That group in and of itself was enough to leave Meng Hao completely shaken, and gave him a hint as to the resources at the disposal of the Vast Expanse School.

In addition to the 100,000 guards were other members of their clans, as well as other ordinary disciples. All in all, the population of the city as a whole was well over a million.

At the moment, Meng Hao was seated cross-legged within the temple. Ten individuals stood there respectfully in front of him. These were none other than the three Imperial Lords and seven 6-Essences Dao Sovereigns.

There was something interesting about the Imperial Lords. Meng Hao wasn't sure how many Imperial Lords the Vast Expanse School had in total, nor how the considerations were made in their assignments. In any

case, the Imperial Lords assigned as his guard were all women.

The three of them were all spectacularly beautiful. As cultivators who had reached the Dao Realm, that was no surprise. With the exception of people with odd perversions, all cultivators grew to be exceedingly good-looking by the time they had reached this level, regardless of how ugly they might have been previously. As for these three, they all seemed to be natural beauties, far beyond the ordinary.

If it were only the Imperial Lords who were women, it might not have been something unusual. However, all seven of the 6-Essences Dao Sovereigns were also women. Meng Hao couldn't help but be a bit surprised at that. It wasn't until he searched through the memories of the Ninth Paragon that he found the answer.

Back in the Vast Expanse Society, outside of the Vast Expanse, the Ninth Paragon had been fond of cultivating magic that required male and female cultivators. The more female vessels he had to drain, and the higher their cultivation bases, the more exciting he found the process.

Obviously, the Paragons from the Vast Expanse School were aware of that, and had made special arrangements. However, as of now, all of those special arrangements were somewhat meaningless.

Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever as he sat there in the temple, twirling a jade slip through his fingers. Within that jade slip were 100,000 souls, which ensured that Meng Hao had no need to use his cultivation base to keep all of his guards under control. With a single thought, he could kill all 100,000 of them.

"This Vast Expanse School is quite interesting," he murmured to himself. He looked up at the ten women in front of him, and most especially the three Imperial Lords.

Of those three, one seemed cold and icy to an extraordinary degree. Based on what Meng Hao knew about cultivation, he guessed that her personality had been affected by the techniques she cultivated, which were surely based on ice and coldness.

Another of the women had a warm smile on her face, and looked at

Meng Hao with awe and respect. Earlier, she had been the one to explain to Meng Hao all of his powers within the sect, and also how the sect was organized into its various factions.

The third of the Imperial Lords had a stony face and seemed very somber. However, deep within her eyes was a revulsion for Meng Hao. Clearly, she was not happy at all at being assigned this position by the sect.

As for the seven 6-Essences Dao Sovereigns, most of them looked nervous. To them, he was the Ninth Paragon, someone far, far above them, and someone whose words were to be taken as commands.

“Alright, keep going,” Meng Hao said coolly, smiling at the warm Imperial Lord.

She nodded and continued her explanation. “In addition to the 100,000 guards and 1,000,000 ordinary disciples, your excellency has a considerable section of land to the far north, set aside for raising starbeasts.

“Also upon our holy planet are 10,000,000 spirit fields under your control, tended by over 100,000,000 spirit peasants. In addition to that is a vein of Earthflame, which is one of the three ultimate alchemic resources on Planet Vast Expanse. The medicinal pills and magical items it produces account for thirty percent of the total yield for the Vast Expanse School.” The Imperial Lord smiled at Meng Hao. When she spoke, her voice was like the the call of songbirds.

“You also possess a continent on the surface of Planet Vast Expanse, your majesty, which is known as the Vast Expanse Ninth Sect. That is where your Dao palace is located, and is also one of the temple complexes of the Vast Expanse School. There are hundreds of millions of disciples there, not to mention countless mortals.

“You are the ultimate authority within the Ninth Sect, and not even the other Paragons can interfere with your orders there. Even the exalted Sect Leader must request your permission before calling upon the resources there.

“In addition, of the 3,000,000 cities on the surface of Planet Vast Expanse, you exercise control over 300,000. You also control 131 businesses, including famous establishments like the Grand Banquet Pavilion, Celestial Benevolence Hall, and the 10,000 Treasures Mansion. In total, the branches of all the business you own number in the millions.

“Then there are your holdings off of Planet Vast Expanse. They include 97 cultivator clans and 64 land masses. Those are only the things which can be numbered. You have countless other interests which are too vast to calculate.”

“Among your direct subordinates are five 8-Essences Paragons and ten 7-Essences Paragons, stationed in various locations. As of now... they are all en route back here to pay their respects to you.”

After hearing the woman’s explanations, Meng Hao felt a bit out of sorts. He could never in his wildest imaginations have guessed that the Vast Expanse School’s Ninth Paragon... would be given so much wealth.

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1. Shangguan Hong’s name in Chinese is 上官宏 shàngguān hóng. Shangguan is an uncommon two-character Chinese surname. Hong means “grand” or “magnificent”.

Chapter 1420: A Direction for Transcendence!

“And that is just ten percent of what is officially part of the Vast Expanse School as a whole.” The warm way she looked at Meng Hao never changed from beginning to end, not even when he ended up looking a bit dazed from her explanation.

As for the other Imperial Lords, the one was still cold-faced. As for the other, her disgusted gaze now seemed to contain a trace of scorn, although she apparently thought she was hiding it well.

Meng Hao’s eyes glittered faintly. As of this point, he had a relatively overall idea of how powerful the Vast Expanse School was. At the very least, it was vastly larger and more powerful than the Mountain and Sea Realm.

“Considering that the three peak powers in the Vast Expanse are the Immortal God Continent, the Devil Realm Continent, and this Vast Expanse School,” he thought, “it leads me to believe that in my battle with the former two, they weren’t using all of their strength. Or perhaps there were some factions within them that chose to remain neutral.”

Meng Hao closed his eyes in thought for a moment, and when he opened them, he looked calmly at the ten women in front of him, then waved his hand dismissively. Finally, he closed his eyes again.

They all bowed their heads and left. After departing the temple, they all went their separate ways to their various residences.

Everything in Ninth Paragon City was quiet, as though pressure was weighing down on everyone. The 100,000 cultivators who were stationed in the city were all very nervous.

There was a sun and moon in the inner planet, and soon night fell. The sky was black, with a field of glittering stars. Silence reigned. In the temple, Meng Hao finally opened his eyes.

After a moment of silence, he slowly rose to his feet and walked forward.

Then he vanished. When he reappeared, he was far above the palace, on the towering pagoda which looked out over Ninth Paragon City.

A wind blew, sending his hair flying about, and his robes rustling. There he stood, looking down at the scene below for some time before lifting his head to gaze off into the distance.

He felt like a stranger here, and everything seemed unfamiliar. The terrain was unfamiliar, the people were unfamiliar, and even the starry sky up above was unfamiliar.

Meng Hao felt very lonely. He had always thought of himself as being strong, but when he thought back to everything that had occurred with the Mountain and Sea Realm, all he saw was a sea of blood, and countless familiar faces, screaming as they died. Gradually, he began to tremble.

He had once believed that his Dao was that of freedom and independence, that it was like a journey upon which all difficulties and setbacks were merely sights to be seen along the way. After looking at those sights, he could move on; his road stretched out into the beyond.

But now, with the Mountain and Sea Realm destroyed, with so many people dead, with the parrot and meat jelly having sacrificed everything so that he could have a chance at another life, it was impossible to view all of those past events as mere sights to see while on a journey.

If they really were just scenery, he would rather stay to enjoy them, and not continue on the journey.

He stood there, heart aching as he thought about the meat jelly in armor form, which he had long since removed and put back into his bag of holding.

Quite some time passed before he managed to get his emotions under control.

“Wait for me.... I will definitely return!

“When I do, I’ll take all of you away. We’ll leave the Green Coffin Vortex, and establish the Mountain and Sea Realm in the starry sky once again!

“And I will definitely do everything I can to bring back those of you who have been lost!” A fierce glint appeared in his eyes, which he eventually buried, returning to a state of calm.

Even the redness of his eyes faded. Even close examination would not reveal the bizarre crimson glow in his pupils.

“My Soul Lamps were destroyed,” he murmured, “and now this bronze lamp has become my Prime Lamp.” The wave of a hand caused the bronze lamp to appear, radiating its aura of primordial ancientness.

“Because of all the precious materials provided by the Vast Expanse School, it was able to remould my fleshly body into a form suitable for it.” He looked thoughtfully at the bronze lamp.

“The lamp is burning, and I can sense that if I extinguish it, my cultivation base, and everything else about me... will experience explosive growth!

“From what I can tell, once that explosion occurs, based on the foundation I’ve built with my cultivation base, it will increase by double, triple, or maybe even... tenfold!” These were the conclusions he had reached after further study of the bronze lamp.

After another moment of silence, eight magical symbols appeared on his forehead. His cultivation base rumbled with power as a shocking energy erupted out. He reached his right hand out and placed it onto the lamp in an attempt to extinguish the flame.

The flame flickered, but no matter how much cultivation base power he threw at it, would not be extinguished.

“Still not quite there yet.... I need the Essences of all eight Hexing magics to be complete.” After looking thoughtfully at the dancing flame within the bronze lamp, he gradually retracted his cultivation base power.

“Of the Essences of the eight Hexes, I’ve only gained full enlightenment of the Dao of the Eighth. The other seven Hexes are incomplete. However, the overall process won’t be difficult. Once I finish absorbing Shui Dongliu’s legacy, and spend some time in secluded meditation, I can

definitely complete all of the Hexes.

“But what is most important, and what will give me the power to extinguish this lamp, is the missing... Ninth Hex!

“Of the Nine Hexes of the League of Demon Sealers, I have already acquired the first eight. As for the Ninth Hex, I’ll need to create that one.” Meng Hao looked out into the night, his eyes glittering.

“From what I can tell, my future path is clear. I must complete the Essences of the eight Hexes. I must gain enlightenment of the Ninth Hex. I must then combine all the Hexes and use that power to extinguish the bronze lamp. Then I will use the power of the bronze lamp to break through the Paragon level and step into... the Daosource! Transcend!” Brilliant light shone within Meng Hao’s eyes, making him look like a blazing sun.

“If I Transcend, toppling the Immortal God and Devil Realms will be as easy as flipping over my hand!

“If I Transcend, resurrecting my dead friends from the Mountains and Seas will be no challenge!

“If I Transcend, I can reunite with the parrot and the meat jelly. Time can be reversed, and the Mountain and Sea Realm can be reverted from a state of destruction... to its former glory!

“Transcendence. Entering the Daosource. At that point I... will become Essence. I will be a supreme and paramount Dao of Heaven and Earth!” Meng Hao was panting, and his mind spun.

“Daosource. Daosource. From ancient times until now, only a few people have ever Transcended into the Daosource Realm!”

“The Immortal God Continent is powerful because countless years ago, one of their people Transcended. It’s the same with the Devil Realm.

“I, Meng Hao... can also do the same!

“The bronze lamp is my hope for Transcendence. It is like the key to open a great door! Acquiring the Essences of the full group of eight Hexing

magics will not be difficult. The true difficulty lies in the Ninth Hex!

“I must gain enlightenment to create that Ninth Hex....” Meng Hao’s eyes shone brightly; he had already come to a vague conclusion regarding that Ninth Hex. “The Seal the Heavens Incantation will be my Ninth Hex!!”

He looked off into the distance as the darkness of night began to give way to the bright glow of day, illuminating his entire person.

The arrival of the Ninth Paragon was a huge matter for the Vast Expanse School. All of the millions upon millions of disciples in the sect were very excited. Of course, news about the matter rapidly spread throughout Planet Vast Expanse as well as the starry sky. In the following months, many of the powers in the region of the Vast Expanse School learned of the matter.

Endless streams of people came to offer congratulations, ensuring that the whole sect was abuzz with activity. Far more cultivators came and went than usual.

As the Ninth Paragon, Meng Hao actually remained undisturbed. He tasked the three female Imperial Lords with handling all matters. Even when other Paragons who were under his command came, he remained in secluded meditation.

That only served to make his subordinates more nervous. After all, Meng Hao was one of the nine most important people in the entire Vast Expanse School, and also had a terrifying cultivation base. At the same time, all of the outstanding individuals who made up the forces under his command were anxiously trying to determine what he liked and didn’t like.

That was the only way for them to ensure that matters went smoothly in the days to come.

The grand ceremony was held several months later. It was a huge affair that involved all of Planet Vast Expanse, and included all the cultivator clans affiliated with the Vast Expanse School, as well as the other land masses in the area.

The ceremony itself lasted for a month, but Meng Hao only made one

appearance in which people actually had the chance to lay eyes on him. Even though he only showed his face once, the coldness and pressure that radiated off of him was enough to give everyone a feeling of being stifled.

That was especially true of the Paragons under Meng Hao's command.

They waited for quite some time in Ninth Paragon City before Meng Hao received them individually. After their audience, each and every one had unsightly expressions on their faces, eyes filled with both hesitation but also a sliver of anticipation.

What Meng Hao had issued to them was his first order after becoming the Ninth Paragon!

"Use all available resources to expand our influence, beginning immediately. Within a thousand years, I want my forces to increase by several times at the minimum!"

The orders were quickly passed down. Whether or not people understood them or even approved, within the domain of the Ninth Paragon, his words were commands!

Whether or not people wanted to comply... they had to!

The forces of the Ninth Paragon immediately went wild with activity. They began to expand, to invade, to raid, and to multiply.

Meng Hao didn't care how they went about it. He only cared about the Mountain and Sea Realm, and his revenge. He didn't want to rest all his hopes on his Transcendence. Therefore, he would prepare... for the possibility that he wouldn't Transcend; if that happened, he still needed to possess the wherewithal to get his revenge.

He needed more people. He needed more power. He needed to prepare to make his future declaration of war.

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Note from Deathblade: Shortly before this chapter was originally released, Er Gen dropped down to doing only about two chapter updates per day, sometimes even one. For a long time before that he was doing

three or four. He addressed the issue in a note at the end of this chapter:

Note from Er Gen: Recently I've been planning some of the upcoming scenes. Book 9 is very important; there are a lot of mysteries to reveal, and situations to resolve. I need more time working with my general outline, so much so that I've been working on it almost every day, either getting rid of things or adding things.

Because of that, my writing has slowed down and the updates have been coming later than usual. I hope you can understand, brothers and sisters.

Chapter 1421: Provocation!

When Shangguan Hong and the others learned of what Meng Hao was doing, they did nothing to stop him. The Sect Leader contemplated the matter briefly, then chose to ignore it.

As long as Meng Hao's actions didn't affect them or their plans, then he could do as he pleased. As long as he didn't do something to endanger the entire Vast Expanse School... then they didn't care what he did.

Furthermore, Meng Hao was careful in his actions. He only used his own forces, and he only expanded into areas that the Vast Expanse School didn't already control.

As his forces began operations, he chose to go into secluded meditation in Ninth Paragon City, and would only receive sporadic updates regarding affairs on the outside.

Time passed. In the blink of an eye, ten years had gone by.

During that time, Meng Hao left Ninth Paragon City on only one occasion. The rest of the time, he remained in secluded meditation while his forces focused on expanding via war and other methods.

Soon, the Ninth Paragon's fame grew in the Vast Expanse as a whole. Eventually, open recruitment began, and vast amounts of new disciples swelled the ranks.

During the ten years that passed, the Paragons under Meng Hao's command were like sharp blades that cut down anyone in their path. As for the 100,000 cultivators who made up his main force, any time they fought in battle, they would overwhelm the opposing force.

Although there were no Paragons among the 100,000 cultivators, they were all elite experts, and could also form together into a huge spell formation.

As for the three female Imperial Lords and seven Dao Sovereigns, the ten years passed for them in relative comfort. Originally, they had been under the impression that being selected as guards for the Ninth Paragon

meant that they were fated to become vessels to be drained in his cultivation practice. The truth was that throughout the ten years, the number of times they actually saw Meng Hao could be counted on a single hand.

A few other important events occurred during that time.

On one occasion, something like a sandstorm sprang up around Meng Hao's location of secluded meditation. A figure appeared within that sandstorm, who spoke in an ancient, raspy voice.

"You're not the Ninth Paragon."

Even as the words echoed out, a burst of peak 9-Essences power could be detected. Meng Hao opened his eyes, his expression calm as he faced the power of the peak 9-Essences level. At that point, the Dao eye on his forehead opened up, and the Essence power of his eight Hexing magics arose. It was with three eyes that he looked out into the sandstorm.

Massive rumbling echoed out into the rest of the half-planet, after which the owner of the raspy voice laughed.

"But I happen to like your personality and hostility. Even more so, your focus and determination." As his words echoed out, the sandstorm faded away, and the figure left the inner planet. When he reappeared, he was back in the desert on the surface of Planet Vast Expanse. His face was a bit pale, but his eyes glittered brightly.

"Mid 9-Essences," the old man murmured. "And yet he can face me directly, and even leave me shaken.... His control over the Dao eye is at a level of perfection!"

A voice suddenly spoke out in front of him. "Many thanks."

That voice belonged to none other than the Sect Leader of the Vast Expanse School!

On that one occasion in which Meng Hao left Planet Vast Expanse, he went to visit a battlefield upon which his forces fought. They were fighting a fierce group whose most powerful expert was a fierce beast at the peak of the 8-Essences level, a vicious Black Dragon. Because of it, this division

of the Ninth Paragon cultivator army had been fought to an impasse.

Among Meng Hao's subordinates there was an 8-Essences Paragon, who had been so seriously injured that he had been left with no option other than to send word back to Planet Vast Expanse asking for assistance.

When Meng Hao appeared, he extended his right hand and waved a finger, causing the starry sky to be crushed, and the Vast Expanse to fill with rumbling sounds. All life forms in the area trembled, including his own cultivators and the enemy horde. One by one, they dropped to their knees, as though massive weights had landed onto their shoulders. Any who refused to kneel were crushed to death in body and spirit.

As for the Black Dragon, it let out a powerful shriek as its flesh and blood was flayed into a mass of blood and flesh. Terror appeared in its eyes as it prostrated itself in submission.

Meng Hao turned and left. The cultivators under his command watched him leave, and their eyes began to glow with unprecedented fanaticism. That was especially true of the 8-Essences Paragon, who let out a gasp. He had seen 9-Essences experts fight before, but the terrifying display put on by Meng Hao just then made him realize that the Ninth Paragon was no ordinary 9-Essences cultivator!

On the final day of the ten year period, Meng Hao sat cross-legged in secluded meditation in Ninth Paragon City. Suddenly, his eyes snapped open, and a glow like starlight could be seen. Anyone who was able to look into his eyes in that moment would feel lost, as though they were sinking eternally into the boundless starry sky.

Floating outside the door of his secluded meditation facility was a white jade slip that emanated a soft light. It was that very jade slip which had awoken Meng Hao from his secluded meditation.

"Has the day finally come?" he murmured. He reached out with his right hand and made a grasping gesture. Outside of the building, the white jade slip vanished.

In the moment that it reappeared in his palm, his mind filled with the archaic voice of the Sect Leader's peak 9-Essences voice.

“Old Ninth... the time has come. We must head to the necropolis!”

Meng Hao’s fingers closed around the jade slip. His expression was the same as ever, but a glint of light passed through his eyes. Ever since the sandstorm rose up around his secluded meditation facilities and the figure appeared with its raspy voice, Meng Hao knew that the plan the Vast Expanse School had been working on for so many years had finally reached a critical moment.

As for Patriarch Vast Expanse’s necropolis, Meng Hao very much anticipated exploring it. He was curious about this supposed method left behind by the Patriarch... to Transcend from the 9-Essences level.

By now, he had been the Ninth Paragon for ten years. Perhaps the Sect Leader had intentionally waited ten years so as to be able to observe him. Although Meng Hao wasn’t sure of the conclusion the Sect Leader had come to after such observation, it appeared as if Meng Hao had gained approval.

“Let’s go see what this Patriarch Vast Expanse’s necropolis is like. He founded the Vast Expanse School, and was himself a Transcendent cultivator, one of only a few within this starry sky.

“Based on the ancient records of the Vast Expanse School, it seems... that Patriarch Vast Expanse was... the first person to ever Transcend, even before the Immortal God Continent and the Devil Realm Continent existed!” A profound gleam appeared in Meng Hao’s eyes as he thought back to many years ago, when the Mountain and Sea Butterfly was speeding through the Vast Expanse, and he had encountered that old fisherman.

“He was the beginning, and I am the end. Was the beginning he referred to... Patriarch Vast Expanse? 1

“And was that entity within the Green Coffin Vortex also connected to Patriarch Vast Expanse somehow?

“During the past ten years, I have studied the histories available within the Vast Expanse School, and apparently, Patriarch Vast Expanse existed countless, countless years ago. It seems... that he could very well be from

the same era as that old fisherman.

“Regardless of all that, there’s still the mysterious origin of this bronze lamp. It wasn’t until after I entered the Vast Expanse School that it began to change. That indicates there’s some sort of relationship between them.

“Patriarch Vast Expanse....” After some more thought, Meng Hao unhesitatingly stepped forward and then vanished. When he reappeared, he was in midair above Ninth Paragon City.

This was only his second time emerging, and even as he began to head toward the location of the main temple, he looked down at the city below and said, “Summon Su Yi and Xin Yue from Ninth Paragon City. Immediately.”

As his voice echoed out, the people below trembled and kowtowed respectfully. The three female Imperial Lords hurried out and offered respectful greetings.

These three women all had different personalities, and that hadn’t changed in the ten short years which had passed. The cold woman was still cold, the scornful woman still failed to hide her scorn, and the warm woman was still just as warm. No different emotions could be seen on their faces.

As for Su Yi and Xin Yue, they were the two 8-Essences paragons under Meng Hao’s command, the two most powerful cultivators among his forces, and he planned to take them with him on this trip to the necropolis.

Ignoring the three Imperial Lords, Meng Hao proceeded forward, and soon arrived in the location with nine altars. Four people had arrived ahead of him.

One was Shangguan Hong with his violet-gold robe. Upon catching sight of Meng Hao, he smiled slightly and nodded. The other three opened their eyes, and when they saw Meng Hao, they smiled. From the expressions on their faces, nothing seemed out of the ordinary at all.

Beneath those four altars could be seen various 8-Essences Paragon

subordinates, sitting there cross-legged. When they saw Meng Hao, they immediately rose to their feet and offered greetings.

Meng Hao smiled, clasped hands, and then sat down cross-legged on the ninth altar to wait.

Before long, the other 9-Essences Paragons arrived, along with the powerful experts who were their subordinates. After all the formal greetings were extended, everyone sat down. Then, rumbling sounds could be heard as a powerful divine sense spread out, and a rift opened above the first altar.

An old man strolled out from within the rift; he was tall, and had long, flowing white hair. His appearance instantly caused incredible pressure to weigh down.

This was none other than the Sect Leader of the Vast Expanse School, who was at the peak of 9-Essences!

What had walked out just now was no divine sense clone, but rather, his true self.

Shangguan Hong and everyone else, including Meng Hao, quickly rose to their feet and clasped hands. "Greetings, Sect Leader!"

The 8-Essences Paragons were the most hasty of all to offer greetings. The Sect Leader nodded slightly and clasped his hands to return the greeting. Then he waved his sleeve and slowly began to speak. "The hour has arrived, ladies and gentlemen.... There is no need for me to emphasize the importance of what we are about to do. We have scouted the perimeter of the Patriarch's necropolis on numerous occasions, and know of the path that leads to the inner regions.

"Our goal is to reach the absolute center of the necropolis. Hopefully, we will be able to reach that goal. If we don't, then we will at least do our best to explore and map more regions inside!"

The eyes of all present began to shine brightly.

The Sect Leader took a deep breath and then waved his sleeve, looking very serious. Instantly, the nine altars began to vibrate as a teleportation

process was initiated.

It was at this point that two beams of light shot toward the altars; it was none other than Meng Hao's subordinates, the two 8-Essences Paragons. However, the teleportation process had already begun, making it impossible for them to approach. Anxious expressions could be seen on their faces as they looked toward Meng Hao on the ninth altar.

Before Meng Hao could say a word, the Sixth Paragon on the sixth altar spoke up. He was a middle-aged man with a long, hooked nose. Voice cool, he said, "Whose people are you? You're late. Leave."

*

1. Meng Hao encountered the fisherman in chapter 1404.

Chapter 1422: Leave My Mark!

As soon as the Sixth Paragon spoke, coldness spread out in all directions. It wasn't frost, but rather was something that cut off the area from the outside. Beyond that barrier, Meng Hao's two subordinates, the 8-Essences Paragons, were shocked. Moments ago, they had been speeding forward, but now they were being pushed back.

It was as if some powerful repelling force had grabbed them, and even as they attempted to push forward, was pulling them backward. The result was that they felt like they were being ripped into pieces.

Their souls and their bodies seemed to be on the verge of separating, and the void around them looked as if it were about to be torn apart. Rumbling sounds filled the air, and blood sprayed out of their mouths. Xin Yue's eyes glittered coldly, and as for Su Yi, her expression was one of anger, and she let out a roar as she attempted to force her way forward.

These two were proud women, and to be disgraced in front of the Ninth Paragon was unacceptable. If Meng Hao himself did this to them, maybe they could accept it, but from anyone other than the Ninth Paragon, it was treatment they could never put up with.

"You think a bit too much of yourselves," the Sixth Paragon said with a cold snort, raising his right hand. However, in that very moment, an aura filled with infinitely colder killing intent exploded out from Meng Hao on the ninth altar.

"Those are my people," he said as he began to stride forward. Each step caused thunderous booms to ring out. At the same time, intense power erupted out from his head, transforming into a vortex that spread out rapidly. Colors flashed and the wind screamed, and in that same moment, he appeared in front of the Sixth Paragon and unleashed a fist strike.

He didn't need any divine abilities to deal with this Sixth Paragon. He used his most direct method, punching. Everything shook as Meng Hao's fist rocketed out, seemingly a black hole that caused the starry sky inside of the half-planet to tremble, and the lands around them to quake. It was

as if this fist strike were backed by the power of this starry sky itself.

The Sixth Paragon's eyes widened, and he extended his right hand to meet the fist strike.

BOOOOOOOOOOMMM!

As the fist strike landed, Meng Hao touched down onto the sixth altar, where he stood completely unmoving. The Sixth Paragon looked like he was standing in the middle of a violent windstorm; his hair and clothing whipped about, and he was trembling visibly. All of his skin which was visible seemed to sink into itself.

As the boom continued to echo out, the Sixth Paragon coughed up a mouthful of blood and staggered backward uncontrollably. When he came to a stop about thirty meters back, he forced himself to hold in the next mouthful of blood that he had been about to cough up, and then looked up, a vicious expression on his face. Roaring in anger, he spread his arms wide, and a massive eruption of Essence power occurred. An enormous, amorphous blade formed which seemed capable of slashing through anything and everything.

"Old Ninth," he yelled, "are you looking to die?" The other Paragons were simply watching the events unfold, strange gleams flickering in their eyes. Meng Hao's fist strike just now had been shocking to behold, and yet none of them had done anything to interfere. As for the Sect Leader, he frowned and then looked over at the Sixth Paragon with an expression of displeasure.

Almost as soon as the Sixth Paragon spoke again, Meng Hao waved his right hand, causing a powerful force to explode out. A windstorm formed, which smashed a hole into the tunnel being created by the teleportation power. That in turn allowed his subordinates to enter.

His two subordinates looked very shaken, although Su Yi took everything in a bit easier. This was actually her second time seeing Meng Hao fight, as she had been observing when he dealt with the Black Dragon earlier.

As for Xin Yue, this was her first time seeing Meng Hao in action, and it caused waves of shock to pound at her heart. His shocking fist strike

seemed capable of destroying an entire world, and left her panting.

As for the hole he had opened to let them in, it seemed to have been made in an almost casual fashion. Both of the women could only gasp in response. Without any hesitation, they flew into the area with the altars to appear standing next to Meng Hao.

“Greetings, Paragon, we arrived late,” they said, clasped hands and bowing.

“I decide whether you’re late or not....” he said coolly. Then he strode forward to once again stand directly in front of the Sixth Paragon. “It has absolutely nothing to do with you, Sixth Paragon. Do you think I need you punishing my subordinates? Do I look like I need your help? Who the hell do you think you are?! I think I need to leave my mark on you to help you remember what happened here today.”

As Meng Hao spoke, the Sixth Paragon’s eyes flickered with killing intent. He waved his arms, sending Essence power exploding out, which transformed into a huge pitch-black head.

Seeing that the two of them were about to start fighting, Shangguan Hong stepped forward. With him were three other Paragons, who stood between Meng Hao and the Sixth Paragon.

“Old Ninth, just forget about what happened.”

“Old Sixth, you’re in the wrong here.”

“Just forget about all of this. We’re supposed to be on our way to the necropolis. Just cool down for now. If you really have so much energy to spare you can put it into getting into the necropolis.”

A flicker of hatred passed through the Sixth Paragon’s eyes, and despite the interference of the other Paragons, he pointed out with both fingers, causing the pitch-black head to roar as it closed in on Meng Hao.

Shangguan Hong and the others looked on with flickering expressions, but before they could do anything, Meng Hao suddenly stepped forward. In the blink of an eye, an azure roc appeared, which then slammed into the pitch-black head.

A boom rang out as the pitch black head of Essence collapsed. Meng Hao in azure roc-form then became a beam of azure light that shot directly toward the Sixth Paragon.

The Sixth Paragon's face fell, and he was just about to fall back when a fist shot out from the light and slammed into his chest.

The Sixth Paragon was knocked completely off of the altar, blood spraying out of his mouth the entire time. Before he could even react, green light flickered, and Meng Hao was on him again, unleashing another fist strike.

Then a third, a fourth, and a fifth!

Booms rang out as the Sixth Paragon was shoved backward over and over again. His chest was caving in, and he screamed miserably. His three 8-Essences Paragon subordinates hesitated, but realized that they had little choice other than to fly out to try to stop Meng Hao.

But then Su Yi and Xin Yue stepped forward to stop them.

"Scram!" Before the two groups could meet up, Meng Hao snorted coldly from within the azure light. He then appeared in bodily form and waved his sleeve, causing Divine Flame to blaze out toward the Sixth Paragon's three subordinates. Their faces fell, but they were incapable of evading, and were sent tumbling back 3,000 meters, blood spraying out of their mouths.

As for the Sixth Paragon, he was completely shaken. How could he ever have imagined that Meng Hao would be so incredibly powerful?

He was being attacked so viciously he could do nothing but retreat, and didn't even have a chance to fight back. He didn't get the feeling he wasn't a match for Meng Hao, but rather that he had lost the initiative and had no chance to actually fight back.

By now, regret was building up in his heart, and he wished hadn't made an attempt to test Meng Hao.

"Dammit!!" he roared as Meng Hao closed in again. Booming sounds rang out as he sent out divine abilities, only for them to be instantly

destroyed. Next came some magical items. They didn't last any longer than the divine abilities.

The other Paragons watched what was happening with strange, thoughtful gleams in their eyes. As of this point, they were starting to gain an understanding of just how powerful Meng Hao was.

And that was exactly what Meng Hao wanted; to establish himself!

Coldness flickered in his eyes as he raised his right hand again. Shockingly, the power of space could be detected, slowly building up in power; it was none other than the Eighth Hex's Essence of space, of which he had gained enlightenment.

When the Sect Leader saw what was happening, his pupils constricted; he took a step forward and waved his sleeve.

"Enough! How far do you plan to take this fight?!"

The Sect Leader was at the peak of the 9-Essences level, so the wave of his arm caused an incredible force to build up between Meng Hao and the Sixth Paragon, shoving them apart.

The Sixth Paragon actually breathed a sigh of relief at being given a way out of the situation. He looked over at Meng Hao with killing intent flickering in his eyes.

Unfortunately for him, he was still underestimating Meng Hao!

"Like I said, I need to leave my mark on you." Even as his cold voice rang out, the Dao eye on his forehead opened up, and a boundless will erupted out. The entire starry sky shook, and all minds began to reel.

In that instant, the power of the Dao eye caused the divine ability just unleashed by the Sect Leader to be frozen in place in front of Meng Hao. Meng Hao then shot forward at a speed far surpassing anything from before.

In the blink of an eye, he was right in front of the Sixth Paragon. The Sixth Paragon's mind was spinning, and wanted to fall back, but felt as if he were stuck in mud; he was simply too slow. His pupils constricted as

astonishment filled his eyes.

The Sect Leader's face fell, and he bellowed, "Old Ninth, stay your hand!"

He took a step forward to appear next to Meng Hao, whereupon he flicked his sleeve. That motion blocked Meng Hao's hands and feet, and was just about to pull him away, when Meng Hao grinned. His aura changed, and a brutal air erupted out of him. Although his hands and feet had been immobilized, his head had not!

He stretched his head out and bit down viciously onto the Sixth Paragon's neck, ripping out a huge chunk of bloody flesh.

Blood sprayed out of the Sixth Paragon's neck, and he screamed. He clamped his hand down onto his neck and shot backward. By now, there was no killing intent in his eyes toward Meng Hao, only intense astonishment.

Of all the people he had fought in his life, this was the most brutal person he had ever encountered. He actually bit a chunk of flesh out of him! As far as he was concerned, this Ninth Paragon was completely mad.

Meng Hao calmly swallowed the chunk of flesh and then said, "That's my mark."

Then he wiped his mouth and walked back to the ninth altar. As he did, the surrounding cultivators watched him, their minds reeling. Even Su Yi and Xin Yue were left gasping.

They would never be able to forget the brutal display put on by Meng Hao this day.

"This guy... should never be provoked!"

"Crazy! He's completely insane...." The Paragons were left gasping, looks of intense vigilance on their faces.

The Sect Leader's face was extremely unsightly, and his mind was being battered by waves of shock. He stared at Meng Hao, and then looked over angrily at the Sixth Paragon. Finally, he headed back to the first altar, his face very grim.

The Sixth Paragon silently returned to his altar, his face pale, terror gleaming in his eyes as he looked over at Meng Hao.

He wasn't afraid of cultivators with a higher cultivation base, but rather those who were completely insane. And Meng Hao was the most insane person he had ever encountered among 9-Essences cultivators.

Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever as he stood there, hands clasped behind his back as if nothing had happened. Behind him, Su Yi and Xin Yue looked at him with awe in their eyes.

A moment later, the teleportation power was unleashed, and rumbling could be heard as a pillar of light rose into the air, and they all vanished.

Chapter 1423: Necropolis Ghost City!

In the starry sky of the Vast Expanse, there were certain extremely mysterious locations. One, for example, was the Green Coffin Vortex. In such locations, the magical laws of the Vast Expanse were different, making it difficult for cultivators to enter them, even 9-Essences experts.

Although Meng Hao hadn't known it originally, he came to be aware that such places were said to be created by Transcendent cultivators.

Only someone who had Transcended could create a location that could cause problems for 9-Essences Paragons. Furthermore, such locations were few and far between in the Vast Expanse; there were only a few in existence.

Supposedly, some of those locations were related to the Vast Expanse Society. Others were connected to the Immortal God Continent. The rest had to do with the Devil Realm. Apparently... all the forces which had produced a Transcendent cultivator were connected to such places.

Some such places were well known, while others were kept secret by various powerful factions, and held their respective organizations' greatest secrets. They were secrets that wouldn't necessarily endanger those groups if they came to be known, but were kept hidden anyway.

Patriarch Vast Expanse's necropolis was just such a place.

The exact location of the necropolis was unknown, and the only way to enter it was via the nine altars on the half-planet of the Vast Expanse School.

In the past, people had speculated that the necropolis was not even located within the starry sky of the Vast Expanse. Some said that it was a location in some other world... where there was no Heavenly Dao.

Supposedly, the reason there was no Heavenly Dao was because magical techniques were thrown into chaos in such places. Sometimes, certain magics couldn't even be used. For example, some locations were places incompatible with the aura of the Vast Expanse, which some people

cultivated.

When Meng Hao and the others appeared, he looked around and saw a starry sky stretching out.

It was a real and true starry sky, with none of the mist that was pervasive in the Vast Expanse.

There were nine land masses floating out in front of them. Upon closer examination, it was possible to see that they were connected by bridges, although the bridges were not stable; they were constantly swaying and swinging back and forth.

Surrounding the nine land masses was a seemingly infinite field of drifting asteroids. Occasionally, they would emit strange fluctuations which provoked sensations of intense danger.

There were no paths visible.

“Now that we’re here, we don’t have much time,” said the Sect Leader. “Only one month. Follow me, and be careful not to lose your way. Don’t interact with anything you see, whether it’s a painting or a person or anything else. If you do... even those of you with nine Essences will perish.” With a final look at everyone, he flickered into motion as he flew out into the starry sky.

Everyone else followed along as if they had done so before. Meng Hao was the only one who seemed more cautious than ever as he followed along.

His two subordinate Paragons followed him, looking around vigilantly.

The group was soon speeding along through the asteroids. The Sect Leader seemed to have mastered some method of travel that ensured they didn’t encounter any restrictive spells. Nor did any of the floating asteroids enter their path of travel. However, the result was that the Sect Leader’s face was a bit pale. His eyes shone with the glow of augury; clearly, leading the group in this way was not an easy task.

Time passed. Four hours later, Meng Hao noticed one of the 8-Essences Paragons up ahead suddenly stop in place and turn to the side with an

expression of shock and disbelief.

This man could shake the Vast Expanse with a single stomp of a foot, and would count as the pinnacle of existence in virtually any world or Realm. And yet, before anyone could warn or remind him of the dangers of the place, his body deflated like a popped balloon. In the blink of an eye, he withered up into a pile of dessicated flesh.

His bones, flesh, and everything about him melted, and then vanished without a trace. Not even his soul had a chance to flee. He died without even making a cry of alarm....

The only thing left behind was his skin, which slowly floated away into the starry sky.

Meng Hao was completely shaken, and everyone else felt their scalps tingling in shock. No one spoke. As they watched the pile of skin float away, laughter could suddenly be heard, at which point they noticed that, unexpectedly, the pile of skin was smiling.

“If you want to stay alive, don’t randomly look around,” the Sect Leader said. “Keep your eyes on the person in front of you. We will follow this path for three days, and if all goes well, we will pass through this perimeter region into the first land of the Patriarch’s necropolis.” With that, he proceeded onward without another word.

Meng Hao said nothing, but his eyes flickered. Then, he proceeded along, keeping his eyes on the cultivator in front of him.

Time passed. A day later, and after a bit of calculation, Meng Hao came to the conclusion that they had already traveled seventy percent of the distance, and that they would soon be nearing the first land mass.

For the most part, the journey was frightening but not dangerous. However, another 8-Essences Paragon died. He wasn’t transformed into a pile of flesh. Instead, he began to suddenly rot.

At first, he didn’t notice. Then the person behind him cried out in alarm. The 8-Essences Paragon spun around, and when he looked down at his body, his eyes fell out of their sockets. Everyone watched as he dissolved

into a mass of blood that dropped down into the depths below.

Meng Hao's vigilance grew. The surrounding asteroids would occasionally pulse with a faint light, and yet everything was absolutely silent. As silent as death.

The Sect Leader moved slower and slower, until finally it reached the point where he needed to make long calculations before each movement. After a bit of observation, Meng Hao came to the conclusion that the Sect Leader's methods of augury and calculation had to do with the movement patterns of the asteroids.

Even as he contemplated the matter, a cry of alarm could be heard behind him from Su Yi. Meng Hao spun and saw the beautiful Xin Yue, head turned to the side, expression blank as she apparently spoke to some unseen person. Her expression flickered, and then she nodded, and a rapturous look of joy appeared on her face.

Even as she nodded, her body began to wither up. Meng Hao frowned, reached out, and tapped her forehead.

A tremor ran through her, and the withering slowed but didn't cease.

Su Yi's expression flickered with anxiety, and she was about to unleash some sort of magic to provide aid, when suddenly her expression also turned blank. She turned to the side in disbelief, then reached out into the void as if to grab something. Then she also started to wither up.

Meng Hao's frown deepened, and he quickly opened his Dao eye. His aura spread out, turning into a vortex that swept out in all directions.

At the same time, the Sect Leader and the other Paragons turned to look at what was happening. The Sect Leader's face fell, and after a moment of hesitation, he gritted his teeth and made his way toward Meng Hao. The other Paragons' faces flickered with hesitation, but seeing that the Sect Leader was approaching, they did the same.

However, before anyone could get close, Meng Hao suddenly raised his hand and said, "Stay back. I should be able to handle this."

His expression was somber, and even as he spoke, a murderous aura

began to rise up from him, which rapidly turned into a raging tempest.

The Sect Leader and the other Paragons were people who were no strangers to slaughter. However, after seeing Meng Hao's murderous aura, their pupils constricted. That was especially true of the Sixth Paragon, who gasped.

It was a murderous aura so intense that ordinary people couldn't compare to it. Not even this group of Paragons contained someone who came close.

"How many people has he killed...?"

"I've never met someone who has slaughtered so many!!"

"Is this Ninth Paragon some sort of jinx, or what...?" Both the 9-Essences Paragons and their 8-Essences subordinates were all completely shaken.

"So," thought the Sect Leader, "he really is... Meng Hao!" It was as if that murderous aura which surrounded Meng Hao contained innumerable screaming souls.

Moments ago....

Meng Hao's face was very serious as he looked around with his third eye, and saw a completely different world!

Within the void of the starry sky was an enormous city. The asteroids around them were actually buildings in that city, and the entire place looked incredibly ancient, as if it couldn't even exist in modern times.

What left Meng Hao even more shaken was that, unexpectedly... they were surrounded by countless figures. There were men and women, old and young, and all of them were cultivators. They were everywhere, and although most of them were simply walking to and fro, some would occasionally turn to look curiously at Meng Hao and the others.

The figures were blurry, their faces pale, their bodies devoid of life force. In fact, what filled the entire area was a boundless aura of death.

Several women were standing next to Xin Yue, smiling as they tugged at her garments. It was as if they were trying to get her to become one of

them. The same thing was happening to Su Yi.

Shockingly, there were even some figures next to Meng Hao who were reaching out to grab him!

He took a deep breath as he realized that this place... was actually a Ghost City!!

Considering the level of his cultivation base, he was able to tell that all of these figures were ghosts, and there were so many of them that it would be impossible to count their number.

A brief moment after Meng Hao's third eye opened and he looked around, all of the ghosts in the entire city stopped what they were doing and turned to look at him. Countless gazes came to be fixed on Meng Hao, whereupon strange glows rose up in their eyes. Only a brief moment passed before they began to scream noiselessly, and then rush madly toward Meng Hao.

To be surrounded by so many ghosts left even Meng Hao feeling like he had fallen victim to a curse; his life force was fading, and an aura of death was threatening to engulf him.

That was the moment in which his murderous aura suddenly erupted out fully, creating a vortex which swept out in all directions.

Chapter 1424: The Ghost Masses Offer Worship!

“Vast Expanse... Dao Body....” No one could hear the murmuring voice except for Meng Hao. Even as the voice brushed against him, his murderous aura exploded out into a vortex which swept the ghosts away from Su Yi and Xin Yue.

However, there were simply too many of the ghosts, so many that Meng Hao’s scalp was numb. As they closed in on him, he reached out, grabbed Su Yi and Xin Yue, and shot toward the Sect Leader.

Even as he sped into motion, he looked around and saw that more figures were appearing in the countless buildings which made up the city, figures which were even more powerful than those he had already seen. There was one path that had no ghosts on it at all, and further off in the distance, far far away, Meng Hao spotted an enormous altar which rose high up into the sky!

The altar was so enormous that it was clearly visible despite being a huge distance away. Looking at it more closely, it appeared to be hovering in the void above the first land mass.

The number of ghosts on the first land mass was so large it was impossible to count. Further off, the other eight land masses were difficult to make out clearly.

Gradually, Meng Hao realized that on the ninth land mass, the land mass furthest away from him, there was a huge throne, upon which sat a person!

That person’s gaze pierced through the boundless starry sky to fall upon him. Apparently... this was the person who had spoken the words ‘Vast Expanse Dao Body’ moments ago. Now, it began to speak again.

“The catastrophe comes. Peak of the Vast Expanse. You are the end....

“Allheaven fears the Immortal.... 1

“You... have finally come....” As the voice echoed out, the ghosts seemed to go even crazier. At the same time, the bronze lamp within him began to flicker.

It all happened in the briefest of instants. As Meng Hao retreated from the ghosts, he could sense madness within them, and yet, they didn't seem malevolent. Somehow, they seemed anxious. Now was not the time to ponder the matter. As his murderous aura shoved the ghosts away, he closed his third eye. In that moment, everything vanished, although he could still sense an incredible coldness building up in the area.

“Let's go!” said the Sect Leader. Everyone began to move, although things were so chaotic, it was impossible to tell exactly which direction they were going. As they sped along, the cold aura behind them continued to grow.

However, because Meng Hao had closed his third eye, the ghosts apparently couldn't detect their presence. After an hour, they emerged from the coldness, their expressions grim. As for Su Yi and Xin Yue, they looked guilty as they followed along silently behind Meng Hao.

Other Paragons immediately gave voice to their fury.

“Dammit, what were you doing? Do you know how much danger we were in just now!?”

“How reckless! You nearly scared us to death!!” Although they couldn't actually see the ghosts, they understood that they had all just experienced a brush with death. Had the cold aura overwhelmed them, they would never have escaped, and would have remained within it forever.

Meng Hao didn't offer any explanation, but he did clasp hands and bow to everyone.

Considering his cold disposition up to this point, the fact that Meng Hao made such a gesture caused the faces of most of the other Paragons to soften. However, their expressions were still somewhat grim; the group was now on an unknown and incorrect path.

All of them knew the potential consequences of taking an incorrect path.

Meng Hao's apologetic clasping of hands was enough to silence most of the other Paragons. However, the Sixth Paragon let out a cold harrumph. "All brawn and no brains! You should have let those two subordinates of yours just die! Saving them got us lost. They deserved to die!"

Normally speaking, he would never have spoken in such a way after the battle he had just experienced with Meng Hao. But now that Meng Hao had earned the ire of the entire group, it was like throwing fuel onto the fire.

"That's right, Old Ninth," chimed in the Eight Paragon, his voice cold. "Simply clasping hands in apology isn't enough. This is a big matter! You got us all lost, and you know what a dangerous position that puts us in!"

The words uttered by these two caused the other Paragons to frown.

The Sect Leader looked over at Meng Hao with furrowed brow.

Meng Hao looked back at him and said, "Many thanks for your assistance back there, Sect Leader."

Actually, the Sect Leader hadn't provided him with much assistance at all, but Meng Hao could tell his attitude in the matter. The fact that he had turned back at all spoke volumes. Furthermore, the other Paragons, with the exception of the Sixth, had all been moving to help him. He wouldn't forget that, and it served to increase his good will toward the Vast Expanse School in general.

"What did you see just now?" the Sect Leader asked.

"A Ghost City," Meng Hao replied. "This entire place is a city, with the asteroids being buildings. We were surrounded by endless hordes of ghosts. This place... is a Ghost City that is invisible to the eyes of the living."

Having heard this, the Sect Leader suddenly reached out and made a grasping motion. A rift opened up, and a profoundly ancient jade slip appeared, which he handed over to Meng Hao.

"Take a look. Is that the city you saw?!"

Meng Hao took the jade slip and scanned it. An image appeared in his mind, the vague image of a city that he instantly recognized as the Ghost City he had seen!

“None other.”

When the Sect Leader heard that, a strange expression could be seen on his face. Looking somewhat excited, he asked, “Did you happen to notice a path...?”

Meng Hao thought back to everything he had seen, and recalled that one particular path which was devoid of ghosts. He nodded.

The Sect Leader looked around quietly for a moment at the asteroids, mixed emotions on his face. Finally, he spoke to the group as a whole, his voice little more than a murmur.

“The legends say that long, long ago, this place was a city, a city so huge that the nine land masses were only the central part of the city itself.

“Back then, it was known as the City of Saints.

“One day, the city disappeared overnight. Virtually everyone died.... Countless lives, countless cultivators, countless beings, all dead.... Their deaths were very bizarre and mysterious, and happened in complete silence.

“Only Patriarch Vast Expanse and a few other people survived. They left together, after which the Vast Expanse Society came to exist outside of the Vast Expanse.

“Years later, Patriarch Vast Expanse returned, and chose to turn this place into his necropolis.

“According to most legends, he eventually perished here. Of course, other rumors state that he didn’t die, but rather, stayed behind alive to accompany the bones of his companions from the past. Supposedly, countless years passed, after which he departed, leaving behind the method for Transcendence.

“In all the legends, the starry sky looked different back then. Supposedly,

when the grieving Patriarch Vast Expanse buried his companions, he transformed the starry sky into the Vast Expanse, for the purpose of accompanying his friends in death.

“The city you saw was the former City of Saints.... Old Ninth, please lead us along the path you saw. That is the way to get to the necropolis.” He sighed after recounting the story to the group. Most of the people present had heard the stories before, but this was Meng Hao’s first time. After a moment of silence, he thought of the world of the Ghost City, and of the figure he had seen on the ninth land mass.

Finally, he nodded and turned to look off into the distance. Then, he led the way, with everyone following as he headed off into the void.

At first, he had to choose his way carefully and with much thought. But about two hours later, he began to pick up speed. No more strange incidents or deaths occurred, making it seem certain that no ghosts were on the path they traveled.

The Sixth and Eighth Paragons didn’t look very happy, but as for all of the other Paragons, their eyes glowed with excitement. Soon, they were getting very close to the first land mass.

However, it was at this point that, all of a sudden, a cold aura suddenly appeared. Everyone could sense it, and before anyone could even react, it increased in intensity by a hundredfold, then a thousandfold, then ten-thousandfold and even more.

As boundless, icy coldness surrounded them, several aura streams appeared that struck fear into the heart of even Meng Hao, and caused the Sect Leader’s face to fall.

Meng Hao stopped in place, as did everyone behind him.

“Nice job, Meng Hao!!” yelled the Sixth Paragon. Not bothering with matters of face, he directly spoke Meng Hao’s name.

The Eighth Paragon frowned and glared at Meng Hao, eyes flickering with killing intent. “Dammit, you’re not leading the way, you’re sending us to our deaths!”

The other Paragons' faces were grim and icy, and they began to rotate their cultivation bases.

"Enough!" the Sect Leader roared. Inwardly, he was sighing; the mission was a failure. Furthermore, even retreating would likely result in injury and loss, especially to the 8-Essences Paragons, who would survive only if they were lucky.

The coldness which had risen up caused everyone's hearts to thump. The Sect Leader sighed bitterly.

"The plan is cancelled. Let's fight our way out. We'll recover and rebuild resources to come back another time." With that, he prepared to leave. The Sixth and Eighth Paragons glared spitefully at Meng Hao, and Shangguan Hong and the other Paragons sighed.

But then, Meng Hao's eyes gleamed, and he suddenly said, "Hold on a moment!"

The Sixth Paragon spun in place, glared at Meng Hao, and smiled coldly. "What are you going to do? Don't tell me you want to stop us from leaving. What, you want us to stick around here to be killed? Meng Hao, your heart is twisted and evil. Do you really think we weren't aware that you consumed the Ninth Paragon?"

"Shut your mouth," the Sect Leader barked. "Old Ninth, forget about the matter. I should have explained things in more detail ahead of time. We can come back again another time." Although the Sect Leader was irritated at this turn of events, he still tried to keep things civil.

Meng Hao ignored the Sixth Paragon. "No, listen, I have the feeling... that these ghost harbor no ill will toward me."

Even as he spoke, his third eyes opened.

At the same time, the Sixth Paragon howled, "I can't believe you still dare to open your Dao- wait, what...?"

Before he could even get through half of his sentence, the rest of his words stuck in his throat. His eyes went wide as he looked around.

He could sense that, as of this moment, the coldness... was actually emanating a sensation of... subservience!! The powerful entities therein that filled him with such fear, were actually... acknowledging allegiance!!

He wasn't the only one who realized this. All of the Paragons could pick up on the clues. Expressions of disbelief appeared on their faces. As for Meng Hao, when he looked around at the world, he saw innumerable ghosts, all of them dropping to their knees to kowtow!

And they were kowtowing to him!

It was like watching a wave run across the surface of the sea as countless ghosts dropped down onto their knees....

What a shocking turn of events!

Their previous madness had contained no killing intent, and their rush toward Meng Hao had not been because they wished him harm. Instead, they could sense on him... the aura of their grand leader.

*

1. This is the same Allheaven as in Allheaven Immortal, Allheaven Dao Immortal, Allheaven Clan, etc. It's been a long time since the term was introduced, so I'm going to repeat the explanation of what it means. "Allheaven" 罗天 could be transliterated as "Luotian," and is a concept from real Daoist mythology. Among all the various heavens that exist, it is the absolute highest heaven. Luo 罗 is a character which can be translated a lot of ways, but in this situation basically means "net." The idea is that this heaven stretches out to cover over all the other heavens like a net. However, instead of calling it Net Heaven (sounds like a bad internet cafe or perhaps a fishing shop), I will use "Allheaven." Incidentally, I've also translated the character Luo 罗 as "sieve" in the past, most notably in the name of the Black Sieve Sect".

Chapter 1425: Allheaven Fears the Immortal!

“Uh....” Although the Sixth Paragon couldn’t actually see what was happening, considering the level of his cultivation base, he had a keen ability to detect and sense auras. As of this moment, all of the cultivators near Meng Hao could sense that the freezing aura... was acknowledging allegiance!

The Sixth Paragon’s eyes went wide. Despite his strength and willpower, he was still shaken, and gasped. The Eighth Paragon had the same reaction, and stared around in complete disbelief at what was happening.

The other Paragons all had similar reactions. Strange glows could be seen in their eyes as they looked over at Meng Hao. What was happening now left them more shaken than when Meng Hao had fought with the Sixth Paragon.

The Sect Leader sucked in a deep breath, glanced at the surroundings, and then looked back at Meng Hao. Suddenly, he had the feeling that all of the decisions he had made about Meng Hao, both earlier and just now, had been correct!

“Not even the real Ninth Paragon would have been able to do this,” he thought. “This is something that exceeds the powers of the Dao eye!” As of this moment, the Sect Leader had absolutely no question at all about Meng Hao’s true identity. At the same time, he completely approved of him.

The Sixth Paragon began to speak without even thinking about it: “If you could have done this before, then why did you wait until just now? You—” The other Paragons nearby him began to edge away and put as much space between them and him as possible.

Before he could even finish speaking, Meng Hao snorted coldly and said: “Shut the hell up!”

He glared at the Sixth Paragon, and although the words he had spoken

were not filled with much force, they were infinitely cold. The Sixth Paragon's mind spun, and he was about to say something else, when his face fell. Off to the side, the Eighth Paragon took a deep breath.

Rumbling sounds accompanied Meng Hao's voice. When an emperor is furious, the officials will likewise be enraged. In much the same way, the surrounding ghosts seemed to lift their heads and emit enraged howls as they turned to stare at the Sixth Paragon!

Although the Sixth Paragon couldn't see that, the intense feeling he was experiencing caused him to bite back his own words. Without even thinking about it, he stepped back a few paces, his face pale. An intense sensation of deadly crisis was currently raging inside of him.

He had the clear and distinct sensation that Meng Hao could control his very life and death with a single thought.

"How could this be happening!?! He... he can force the ghosts to acknowledge allegiance, and can also control them!?! This... this is impossible!"

Even as the Sixth Paragon was shaking and panting, the Sect Leader took a step forward and looked at Meng Hao.

"Old Ninth, some light punishment is in order. After all, we're all on the same side. There's no need to allow internal strife to ferment."

After a moment of silence, Meng Hao looked coldly at the Sixth Paragon. "In the future, keep your mouth shut when I'm talking. If you don't, I'm perfectly fine with having someone replace you as Sixth Paragon!"

The Sixth Paragon's face drained of blood, and although a look of venomous hatred appeared in his eyes, he said nothing in response. However, the killing intent within him grew even more intense than before.

"And then there's you!" Meng Hao said, turning to look at the Eighth Paragon.

The Eighth Paragon took a deep breath. Forcing a smile onto his face, he clasped hands and bowed, declining to offer any words in accompaniment.

Seeing such a reaction caused Meng Hao to frown. The meaning behind the words he had just spoken had been clear, and the fact that the previously aggressive Sixth Paragon suddenly acted in this way was very telling.

“To be chided by me like that,” he thought, “and refrain from saying anything in response indicates there is someone backing them who exceeds their power level. But who...?” Meng Hao thought back to everything that had happened so far, and also recalled that the Vast Expanse School had a total of four experts at the peak of the 9-Essences Level. The Sect Leader was one, but there were three others in addition to him.

One of them was the man with the raspy voice who had spoken to him when he was in secluded meditation. As for the other two, Meng Hao had never met them.

His eyes flickered, and then his expression returned to normal. He looked around at the ghosts and waved his hands, experimentally sending out a stream of will. Instantly, the ghosts up ahead parted ways to reveal a path!

Meng Hao could tell that this path... was the same path he had seen earlier, which had been devoid of ghosts!

Without any further delay, he led the group onward. The Sect Leader went along right behind him, and the other Paragons followed along. They proceeded for about half a day, during which time they made more progress than the Sect Leader could have made in two days, and those would have been two days fraught with danger.

Eventually, they reached the end of the path. A huge, shocking land mass spread out in front of them, deathly quiet and filled with ruins.

There were no living beings. Everything was as silent as a graveyard.

The ghosts had also been following Meng Hao, but having reached this location, they stopped and looked off into the distance. Apparently, none of them were willing to enter the land mass.

Meng Hao turned back and looked at them. Although his Dao eye was now shut, he could still sense their presence. For some reason, he had the strange sensation that the bronze lamp, which was part of him now, was experiencing a feeling of sorrow.

“They must have been kowtowing to the previous owner of the bronze lamp.... Now that I think about it, perhaps this bronze lamp once belonged to... Patriarch Vast Expanse.” After a moment, Meng Hao clasped hands and bowed deeply to the ghosts.

The other Paragons watched what was happening, and various thoughts ran through their minds.

Between the end of the path and the land mass itself was a bridge, swaying there in the starry sky. One end was attached to the land mass, and the other connected to an enormous asteroid, which was fixed unmoving within the starry sky.

There was a cold wind blowing that smelled of rot and decay. It was impossible to tell where it came from or where it was going; it was as if it existed eternally, and was the reason the bridge was swaying back and forth. It was very strange.

Meng Hao stood there in front of the bridge for a moment, and then turned to the Sect Leader. Further behind were Su Yi and Xin Yue, who were completely on guard. Even they could sense that the bridge contained a strange and bizarre aura, which left them unsettled.

“So we’ve made it back to the bridge again....” the Sect Leader said. “We saw this same bridge twice before. This is the third time....”

“The last two times, we took a different path, a more dangerous path, to get here.” The Sect Leader looked at the bridge with both excitement and determination.

“The previous two times we tried to cross it, we were blocked in the middle. The last time, we only made it about seventy percent of the way across. Many of our subordinates died, as did most of the clones we had created.

“Old Ninth, the entire reason we requested your presence was because of your Dao eye.... Please, use it to take a look at the bridge, and you’ll understand.”

Meng Hao’s eyes flashed with decisiveness as his third eye opened up on his forehead.

In that instant, the world changed. The bridge was still a bridge, but on the other side, the land mass bustled with cultivators.

There were countless buildings, and innumerable cultivators....

Now, the figure which Meng Hao had seen on the distant ninth land mass was much more clearly visible. It was a man sitting on a huge throne. He was looking directly at Meng Hao, and his voice was even clearer than before.

“Allheaven... fears the Immortal....

“... Does not want the Immortal to appear... wants the Demon to arrive....

“The variations of the Demon are like the variations of Heaven....

“The appearance of the Demon requires grief.... If you die, everything will be over....”

Meng Hao was shaken mentally by this voice which only he could hear, and when he heard the word ‘Demon’ uttered, his mind reeled.

After a moment, his eyes glittered, and he looked away from the vague figure, allowing his gaze to come to rest on the bridge. Shockingly... he saw unending gore, masses upon masses of it formed into the shape of a bridge that dripped with blood. It was a shocking sight.

He saw countless arms stretching out, which occasionally performed incantation gestures, filling the bridge with the fluctuations of restrictive spells, some powerful, some weak.

Surrounding the bridge was a blood-colored mist. Occasionally, eyes would appear briefly within the mist, and they stared greedily at Meng Hao and the rest of the party.

Most shocking of all was that beneath the bridge was no void, but rather

an abyss. Down within that abyss was a three-headed giant, currently climbing up from the depths below. It occasionally bellowed in rage, the sound of which transformed into a tempest that caused the bridge to sway back and forth.

Almost in the same moment that Meng Hao caught sight of the three-headed giant, its three heads looked up, and six pairs of eyes came to rest on Meng Hao. Their gazes locked, and Meng Hao felt his mind reeling as an intimidating will swept through him.

His eyes glittered with cold light, and he snorted, stamping his foot down and sending his divine sense crushing down. The entire bridge swayed, and the three-headed giant let out an enraged roar that only Meng Hao could hear, before looking away.

“This bridge is made from flesh and blood. It’s surrounded by a mist, and below is a three-headed giant, eyeing us the way a tiger eyes its prey.” As the words left Meng Hao’s mouth, very serious expressions could be seen on the faces of the group behind him.

The Sect Leader nodded and said, “This bridge is the only way onto the first land mass. Once you begin to tread it, it is possible to step off of the bridge onto either side. But if you do so, and remain off the bridge for too long, you will most certainly die.

“There are restrictive spells on the bridge, and a false step could potentially lead to eternal destruction. A single misstep might be harmless, but as more and more false steps are accumulated, increasing levels of spell power will build up which will explode out at certain spell nodes. If that happens, we will never make it to the land mass.

“That is why we need your Dao eye, Old Ninth, to see through everything hidden in the void. Help point out the way to avoid the powerful restrictive spells. In those places where we must pass through the spells, please help us select the weakest ones.” With that, the Sect Leader clasped hands and bowed deeply to Meng Hao.

“This is what we request of you, Fellow Daoist. If we succeed, then I will guarantee you a place in the lineup to gain Transcendence

enlightenment.”

Chapter 1426: Bombardment of Killing Intent!

Meng Hao could sense the Sect Leader's sincerity. As his words echoed out, the ripples of a Dao oath could be seen, indicating that he was swearing upon his own Dao that his statements were true.

With the exception of the Sixth and Eighth Paragons, the other Paragons had no enmity with him. Although none of them were friends either, they still clasped hands and bowed.

Meng Hao studied the bridge for a time, then nodded. By this point, his interest in the necropolis was no less than that of the Sect Leader's.

"Many thanks!" the Sect Leader said in response. He took a deep breath and waved his hand, whereupon one of his 8-Essences subordinates stepped forward. After clasping hands to the group, he walked up to the edge of the bridge, and then looked over at Meng Hao.

After a bit of study, Meng Hao identified a place on the bridge that had weak fluctuations. "Nine meters in is a weak restrictive spell that can't be avoided."

Further observation revealed numerous similar locations on the bridge. However, there were other areas with fluctuations so powerful he was left shaken.

The bridge was not an inanimate object; it was alive, and the fluctuations of the restrictive spells grew more intense the further one went along the bridge. Apparently the fluctuations were like flowing water that could provoke transformations amongst each other.

The source of all of the restrictive spells... were the arms that stretched out from the flesh and blood that made up the bridge, which were constantly performing incantation gestures and unleashing magical sealing marks!

The 8-Essences cultivator stepped forward and alighted onto the nine-meter position that Meng Hao had pointed to. A faint shattering sound

echoed out, and the cultivator shivered. However, after a moment, he regained his composure.

At the same time, Meng Hao could sense that the footfalls of the 8-Essences cultivator caused the red eyes within the mist to lurch toward him. However, before they could get close, they were sent spinning away with unyielding howls.

“Ahead, twenty-seven meters!” Meng Hao said. The 8-Essences cultivator immediately advanced to the second location indicated by Meng Hao. At the same time, Meng Hao moved forward, becoming the second person to actually step onto the bridge. That was the best way for him to be able to see the situation most clearly.

In the instant he stepped onto the bridge, his third eye revealed that all of the countless arms suddenly paused, then resumed their incantation gestures with increased speed.

Other than that, there was no change. Meng Hao looked around, then began to speak.

“Up ahead, twenty-one meters. Then another thirty-three meters. Then twelve meters. Twenty-four meters. Ninety meters. Fifty-one meters....”

Behind him came another 8-Essences Paragon, and then more of the group. By the time that first 8-Essences cultivator reached the final location indicated by Meng Hao, there were already several people on the bridge.

In addition to Meng Hao, there were even two 9-Essences Paragons among the group.

Clearly, these people didn't place a lot of trust in Meng Hao, and thus chose to stagger the 8-Essences and 9-Essences Paragons. Doing so ensured that, even if Meng Hao did have some evil designs, he would only be able to take action once or twice before people caught on.

As far as the subordinates were concerned, the hope of Transcendence made it worth the risk!

To 7-Essences Paragons, Transcendence was something far removed

from their current level. But for 8-Essences experts, it was far more meaningful. Although they couldn't actually Transcend, gaining enlightenment of the method would help them advance by leaps and bounds, and maybe even break through to the 9-Essences level.

Time passed. Meng Hao's third eye was gradually growing bloodshot, and the mental strain was increasing. The restrictive spells on the bridge were constantly changing, which in turn required constant adjustments on Meng Hao's part. At first, things went quickly, but the process eventually went slower and slower. By this point, the first cultivator to have stepped onto the bridge was about thirty percent across.

On several occasions, the surrounding mist would surge toward the cultivators, but before it could get close, was rebuffed. The roars from within the mist grew more intense, and Meng Hao's third eye more bloodshot. The 8-Essences Paragon up ahead of him was proceeding with an ashen face. Suddenly, he stepped a bit out of line, whereupon he coughed up a mouthful of blood and began to wither up. The mist around him cackled with joy, and surged toward him. In the blink of an eye, he was on the verge of being consumed.

In that moment, Meng Hao reached out with his right hand and made a grasping motion, grabbing the 8-Essences cultivator and sending him back in the line. Another of the subordinate Paragons gritted his teeth and flew forward to take the vanguard position.

The 8-Essences Paragon who Meng Hao had just saved cast an appreciative glance in Meng Hao's direction. Meng Hao nodded and proceeded to make more observations. Then, the group continued on their way across the bridge.

Thirty percent. Forty percent. Fifty percent. Sixty percent.... Several days later, they were seventy percent across the bridge. The Vast Expanse School had never gotten past this point in their previous efforts.

By this point, one 8-Essences Paragon after another had been sent to the vanguard position. Eventually, it reached the point where that position was occupied by the clones of the Sect Leader and the other most powerful

experts.

Those clones were even more powerful than the 8-Essences Paragons, enabling them to stay in the vanguard position for longer periods of time. Soon they crossed the eighty percent mark, and a few days after that, had reached the ninety percent mark!

The first land mass was no longer a distant sight; it now stretched out in front of them in all its grandeur.

Excitement could be seen on the Sect Leader's face, and it was the same with everyone else. They yearned to cross the entire bridge... and enter the necropolis of Patriarch Vast Expanse, there on the first land mass.

More time passed. The howling within the mist grew more intense, and it often surged toward the cultivators. But because they had Meng Hao leading the way, and were both bypassing the most powerful of the restrictive spells and suppressing the weak ones, the mist never had an opportunity to touch them.

After passing the ninety-nine percent point, the person in the lead position was less than 30,000 meters from the end of the bridge. To a mortal, it would be a vast distance, but to cultivators like this, it was a distance that could be spanned in a single step, if not for the restrictive spells in the way.

"We're almost there!"

"The necropolis of the first land mass is right up ahead!!"

"We've been waiting years for this day, and now it's upon us!" Everyone was very excited. As for Meng Hao, his third eye was in significant pain. Using it for such an extended period of time was apparently a serious drain on his cultivation base, and he had even been taking opportunities to rest along the way.

Now that there were only about 30,000 meters left, Meng Hao began to close his third eye for some rest and recovery, when all of a sudden, an intense sensation of imminent danger exploded up within him. The source of that danger was a shadowy figure within the depths of the abyss below.

It was none other than the three-headed giant!

Throughout the entire trip, Meng Hao had not been able to catch a single glimpse of the giant he had seen at the outset. He had looked for it, but found no trace. But now, here it was again.

No one else could see it, but they could sense an unprecedentedly cold air rising up. Meng Hao's third eye snapped back open, and the exhaustion which had been visible therein was now gone.

Meng Hao was profoundly observant and insightful, and had long since come to the conclusion that the three-headed giant was simply waiting for the right moment to make a move. During the journey so far, the occasions on which Meng Hao rested because of exhaustion had actually all been an act. During the entire time, he had kept himself at peak battle readiness.

The three-headed giant roared, and the cold wind grew even more icy than before, transforming into a wild tempest that knocked Meng Hao off the bridge.

He ground to a halt out in the void, then snorted coldly, performing an incantation gesture with his right hand and then waving his finger toward the three-headed giant. A powerful force slammed into the giant, sending it flying back down into the abyss.

Meng Hao didn't pursue it. Instead, he turned back toward the bridge. However, it was in that moment that something very unexpected happened!

The Sixth and Eighth Paragons suddenly joined forces to unleash an Essence divine ability that rocketed directly toward Meng Hao.

This sudden turn of events caused the Sect Leader's face to fall. He was about to step forward and intervene when a shadowy figure appeared next to him and reached a hand out to block his path. It was none other than the man in the sandstorm who had visited Meng Hao when he was in secluded meditation.

"Sha Jiudong, what are you doing?!" Even as a grim expression overtook

the Sect Leader's face, the other Paragons' faces flickered. Meng Hao had offered incredible assistance to them on their journey, and that was especially so for the 8-Essences Paragons. Meng Hao had saved all of their lives, and as such, the current development left them enraged. However, there was little time for them to put thought into the matter. 1

Just when they were about to take action, a figure materialized behind the Sixth and Eighth Paragons, a young man in a golden robe, who radiated golden light.

He was another of the four peak 9-Essences experts from Planet Vast Expanse!

Killing intent swirled in his eyes as he glared at Meng Hao and extended his right hand. Golden light surged around him, and rumbling sounds could be heard as an invisible power erupted out. That was the power of the peak 9-Essences level, and when it combined with the divine ability unleashed by the Sixth and Eighth Paragons, it created a force that could crush anything in its path.

Even as killing intent flickered in Meng Hao's eyes, the roar of the three-headed giant once again echoed out from below as it shot upward, reaching out to grab Meng Hao.

Descending from above was the combined attack of three Paragons. Below was a seemingly invincible three-headed giant. Surrounding him was the mist, which thanks to his third eye, he could now see was surging toward him.

By this point, the entities in the mist hated Meng Hao with a vengeance. If he weren't around, they would have been able to consume any number of cultivators from the bridge, and would have eaten to their hearts' content. But now, they hadn't succeeded even once. Roaring, they shot through the starry sky toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's face darkened. Although he had been prepared, the plot against him was excellently laid. Even still, he didn't panic. The truth was that from the moment the Sixth Paragon had begun to provoke him, he had guessed that there was some other powerful figure backing him.

Snorting coldly, eyes swirling with killing intent, he performed a double-handed incantation gesture and unleashed Demon Sealing Hexing magic. He was confident that doing so could reverse the setback. Although he might not be able to fight his opponents directly, he could at least get back onto the bridge and into a position where he could be aided by the Sect Leader and the others.

However, it was at this very moment that intense fluctuations began to emanate out from the bronze lamp. At the same time, Meng Hao could sense something calling to him from deep within the abyss, something that wanted to him to come down!

“Allheaven fears the Immortal.... Come... come... come....”

*

1. Sha Jiudong's name in Chinese is shā jiǔ dōng 沙九东. Sha is a surname which also means “sand.” Jiu means “nine,” and dong means “east.”

Chapter 1427: All Ye Shall Call Me Allheaven!

Meng Hao's mind was reeling. The fluctuations emanating from the bronze lamp grew stronger, and it reached the point where he knew that if he missed this opportunity, it could have grave ramifications in the future.

Even more shocking to Meng Hao was that in his moment of hesitation, it almost felt as if the bronze lamp were going to burst out of him and fly down into the abyss of its own accord.

He didn't hesitate for even a moment longer. Casting a cold glance at the intense golden light shooting toward him from the golden-robed young man and the Sixth and Eighth Paragons, and looking around at the greedy, brutal figures within the mist, he suddenly shot downward. The light and the mist passed over the spot he had just occupied, and at the same time, he slammed into the giant.

A huge boom rang out, and the three-headed giant screamed miserably. Blood oozed out of Meng Hao's mouth as he shot downward into the abyss, ignoring the bridge completely.

Of course, to all of the other cultivators on the bridge, it didn't look like Meng Hao was intentionally heading down into the dark void below. Instead, it seemed as if the golden-robed young man and the other Paragons were forcing him to do so.

"Sha Jiudong! Jin Yunshan!" roared the Sect Leader, enraged. His cultivation base surged as if he were preparing to fight with the other two.

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However, Sha Jiudong and Jin Yunshan didn't seem willing to engage in fighting. They immediately fell back, whereupon the three of them began to confer via a method only they could participate in. Eventually, the Sect Leader's face flickered with disbelief and other mixed emotions.

"Impossible," he murmured.

As for what happened after that, Meng Hao didn't care enough to pay

attention. As he whistled through the void down into the depths of the abyss, he recalled what the Sect Leader had said about the ramifications of being off of the bridge for an extended length of time. Death would be the result, and as of now, Meng Hao was already seeing evidence of why that was the case.

Astonishingly, the mists around him were growing thicker and thicker, and they were growing ever closer to him. Lurking within those mists was an aura that left his heart pounding.

However, as the mists neared, the bronze lamp within Meng Hao suddenly let out a soft glow. It passed outside of Meng Hao's body, surrounding him, and when the mists touched it, countless screaming voices could be heard, as if their owners were being melted away by the light.

Meng Hao settled himself. Following the tug of the bronze lamp, he continued downward. Behind him, the three-headed giant roared, apparently not frightened of the lamp at all as it pursued him relentlessly.

The further down he went, the more intense the fluctuations of the bronze lamp became. Before long, Meng Hao caught sight of land down below.

Most accurately speaking, it was a strip of land jutting out from the larger first land mass. Visible there was a statue which had apparently been standing, tucked away, for countless years.

It was tens of thousands of meters tall, and at first glance it almost looked like a mountain.

It depicted a young man clad in a long robe, who was gazing upward. A vicious expression twisted his face, and a brutal air radiated out from him. It almost seems as if he were roaring in rage, and there were even blue veins visible, bulging out all over his face. Upon further examination, Meng Hao realized that he actually resembled the figure he had seen via his third eye, the person sitting on the throne on the ninth land mass.

However, this statue had a stubborn, unyielding expression, as well as an intense focus in his eyes that seemed to be boundless resentment.

Faint tendrils of mist seeped out from him, which was in fact the source of the shocking mist which filled the abyss.

Visible on the statue's forehead was a rift, into which someone had stabbed a sword.

Whatever force was causing the bronze lamp to be stirred into action was coming from within that rift.

Next to the statue was a cliff, although closer examination revealed that it was no simple cliff. It was actually an enormous... gravestone.

Written on the gravestone was a single line of text.

"My first clone, felled by Allheaven."

Beneath the line of text was the name of the person who had written it. Unexpectedly, it was... Patriarch Vast Expanse.

Meng Hao felt shaken as he looked at the statue. Although the statue seemed to have been carved out of rock, when he looked closer, it actually seemed to have been formed from flesh and blood.

Before he could study the statue any further, the three-headed giant appeared. Roaring, it launched itself at Meng Hao, its eyes glowing with turbid red light.

Meng Hao frowned and rotated his cultivation base. A vortex appeared around him, which rapidly transformed into a wild tempest. He stepped forward, punching out with the God-Slaying Fist.

A boom rang out. Based on the current level of Meng Hao's battle prowess, that fist strike would cause an ordinary 9-Essences expert to cough up blood. However, all it did to the three-headed giant was send it staggering backward by a few hundred meters. Roaring, it attacked again.

"That's some thick skin," Meng Hao thought, frowning. Killing intent swirled in his eyes as he unleashed another attack. One punch, two punches, three punches. In the blink of an eye, he unleashed dozens of fist strikes. Intense booms rang out, until finally, the three-headed giant coughed up some blood. However, the brutal gleam in its eyes was even

more evident than before.

“Looking to die?” Meng Hao growled, waving his sleeve. Numerous mountains appeared out of nowhere, each one of which exuded shocking power as it crushed down onto the three-headed giant. Even as blood spurted out of various wounds, the giant’s three heads let out piercing cries which became an indescribably powerful sound wave that battered against Meng Hao.

A tremor ran through him, and his face paled. And yet, he took a step forward, then another. He took a total of seven steps, each of which caused his energy to rise. Then, when the entire abyss seemed to be shaking violently, his finger slashed out like lightning.

That finger swipe slammed into one of the giant’s heads, causing it to instantly explode. The giant let out a bloodcurdling scream, and the other two heads suddenly seemed to be struggling. For a moment, the giant’s eyes became clear, but then a moment later, a turbid red glow took over. The giant stopped moving, looked at Meng Hao, then launched another attack.

A boom rang out as massive power blasted toward Meng Hao. He fell back several paces, simultaneously performing an incantation gesture with his right hand. Then he waved his finger, unleashing the Eighth Demon Sealing Hex.

Instantly, the Essence of space descended. The now two-headed giant trembled, and then began to struggle against the effects, but that was when Meng Hao closed in and waved his finger again.

A huge boom rang out as another of the giant’s heads exploded. There was only one head left, but now, the turbid glow in its eyes was gone. Instead, they glowed brightly, without a trace of red, and its pupils were now visible.

“Allheaven...” the giant suddenly said. “Allheaven...” Then it howled, and a pained expression twisted its face. It grabbed its remaining head with its hand as if it were slipping into insanity.

“If you think you can control me, well stop dreaming!” the giant

screamed. "I'm the subordinate of Vast Expanse, the God Titan!"

As the giant roared, an air of brutality and infinite madness radiated out, accompanied by a feeling of profound ancientness.

A moment later, his clear eyes once again stirred with a turbid glow. He looked down at Meng Hao almost as if for the first time, and an expression of disbelief appeared in his eyes.

"Master... is that... is that you...?" he said. Trembling, he began to charge once again in attack. "Kill me! I'm your God Titan, and I'd rather die than be controlled by Allheaven. Kill me, Master!"

Roaring, the giant headed directly toward Meng Hao, apparently making no defensive preparations whatsoever.

Meng Hao was taken aback. As the giant closed in, its attack built in intensity until a windstorm raged around it. By now, the turbid redness had completely retaken its eyes.

Meng Hao didn't hesitate at all. His finger shot out again, tapping the giant's forehead a third time.

A boom rang out, and a massive wound pierced through the giant's head. As it spread out, filling his body, he trembled. And yet, the turbid glow was now gone, and his eyes were completely clear.

He looked at Meng Hao, his expression one of pain and reminiscence. "So you're not my Master...?" he murmured. "Well, thank you anyway...."

"Allheaven. Allheaven." Laughing loudly, he closed his eyes, and his body collapsed.

Everything went silent. Meng Hao hovered there quietly for a moment, frowning. The giant's actions had been odd to say the least, and had become even more odd once the turbid glow left its eyes.

"Who is Allheaven? Allheaven fears the Immortal?" Something seemed off. After looking at the rift in the statue's forehead again, he approached it to examine it further.

"Killed... by a single sword strike," he murmured. The statue itself was

enormous, so naturally, the rift was as well. It appeared to be at least thirty meters tall.

“The fact that the clone of Patriarch Vast Expanse was interred here by the Patriarch himself... The city and the land masses that became the Ghost City.... The Sect Leader’s description of the legends.... And then this three-headed giant’s words. What mystery is at work here?

“Obviously, it has something to do with the bronze lamp inside of me.” Numerous speculations ran through Meng Hao’s mind. After some more thought, his eyes began to glow, and he flickered into motion. Following the stirrings of the bronze lamp, he entered the rift, and thus, the interior of the statue.

There was no flesh and blood, only a stone tunnel. At first, the tunnel sloped downward, but soon it changed direction and headed upward. As Meng Hao sped along, he felt the fluctuations in the bronze lamp growing ever stronger, and the call from earlier, ever closer.

Several hours later, he came to a stop. Up ahead, the tunnel led into a stone cavern, on either side of which could be seen frescoes carved into the wall. The frescoes themselves were what immediately caught Meng Hao’s attention.

They depicted scenes from countless ages past. Innumerable living beings were depicted, and even wild beasts. All of them were prostrating themselves in worship toward the sky, toward a figure who was approaching, bathed in light.

That figure looked down on all creation.... His upraised right hand held within it a stretch of starry sky, within which could be seen countless heavenly bodies....

As he stared at the frescoes, Meng Hao’s mind and soul, everything about him, seemed drawn to the images. He almost seemed to sink into the world depicted in the frescoes.

It was as if he had become one of those prostrating figures. He could sense how ancient the world around him was, and could detect the boundless nature of Heaven and Earth. Within his ears rang the voice of

that figure which looked down upon all creation.

“All ye living beings shall call me... Allheaven.

“Because of mine existence, there is the universe, and thus the starry sky, and thus the heavenly bodies, and thus all of ye people....”

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1. Jin Yunshan's name in Chinese is 金云山 jīn yún shān. Jin is a common surname which also means “Gold.” Yun means “cloud” and shan means “mountain”.

Chapter 1428: The Passing of Ages in Frescoes

Time passed, and soon Meng Hao began to tremble. His eyes grew clear, and he backed up a few steps, panting, waves of shock pounding his heart as he looked at the visions from the frescoes.

“Allheaven....” he murmured. Countless questions bubbled up in his heart, but after some thought, his eyes glittered as he left the stone chamber and proceeded along down the tunnel.

Even as he shot through the tunnel, on the bridge connecting to the first land mass up above, several figures were speeding along. With Meng Hao present, that final 30,000-meter stretch would not have taken long for the cultivators of the Vast Expanse School to pass, and would have been quite safe.

But with Meng Hao gone, the group finally experienced the true danger of passing through that region. After only traveling 15,000 meters, they had already experienced several casualties.

Even the 9-Essences Paragons had experienced losses; all of their clones had been destroyed, and their true selves were in bad condition. In the final 15,000-meter journey, everyone drew fully on their most powerful abilities and trump cards to stay alive.

With all of that, they eventually managed to reach the very end, although by that time, three more people had perished.

Even that was only because the Sect Leader and the other two peak 9-Essences cultivators had gone all out. Otherwise, there would have been even more casualties. In the end, all three peak 9-Essences cultivators ended up ashen-faced from the effort expended.

Although no words were exchanged, fury built up in the hearts of many. The stark difference between Meng Hao's presence, and the lack thereof, caused many in the group, including the Sect Leader, to feel increasing rage toward the two other peak 9-Essences experts, as well as the Sixth

and Eighth Paragons.

When they finally stepped off of the bridge and onto the land mass, grim expressions could be seen everywhere.

After a moment of silence, the Sect Leader glanced around, then looked icily at the other peak 9-Essences experts, and the Sixth and Eighth Paragons. "We walk different paths. I won't be traveling with the four of you."

The others snorted coldly, then followed after him.

"Very well, that's fine," said Jin Yunshan, smiling. "Our mutual goal is the Transcendence Dais, which means they will also head there eventually. However, there must be other good fortune to be had in this place besides the Transcendence Dais.

"Since that's the case, we can split up here and meet back up again at the Transcendence Dais." With that, he waved his sleeve, sending a jade slip flying out to both the Sixth and Eighth Paragons. Then, he turned and left.

Sha Jiudong shook his head and headed off in a different direction.

The Sixth and Eighth Paragons exchanged a glance, then left with their subordinates.

Meanwhile, back in the tunnel deep below the surface of the land mass, Meng Hao was speeding along. A few days later, he arrived at a second stone chamber.

As soon as he entered, he looked around and found that this place also had frescoes on the walls.

The frescoes depicted numerous starry skies, each of which was filled with one Realm after another.... There were countless heavenly bodies, countless worlds, countless forms of life.

The living beings were born and died in a ceaseless cycle of reincarnation. It was almost as if time were passing in some unique way within these frescoes. There were no written words to explain what was

happening, but Meng Hao could tell that what was being depicted was the passage of endless time.

The figure known as Allheaven gradually began to glow with light. The light grew more and more intense, until eventually, his entire person was a shining beacon. Then, unexpectedly... he began to fade away.

The first things to disappear were his legs, then his body, and then his head. Soon, the only part of him remaining behind to prop up the boundless starry sky was his right hand. Everything else was gone.

Eventually, his palm and thumb vanished, leaving behind only four fingers encircling the starry sky. Gradually, all the light was absorbed into those fingers, ensuring that they... didn't fade away, but rather, began to thrum with life force. Four unique auras began to stream out of them, indescribable auras that actually seemed more powerful than the figure itself when it was whole!

When Meng Hao saw what was happening, waves of shock battered at his heart.

"How could this be happening....?" he murmured.

"This... this...." Despite Meng Hao's level of willpower, he was panting. Of those four fingers, the second had an aura that he realized was familiar.... It was a God-like aura. After a moment of confirmation, he was certain that this aura was the same as that of the statue on the Immortal God Continent.

Furthermore, the third finger of the statue radiated the same sensation as the wild and barbaric Devil Realm Continent. A Devil-like aura!

And then there was the first finger. Its aura was like an Immortal's, and yet was not. It was rife with death, with the same aura as that in the necropolis of Patriarch Vast Expanse! It contained the same fluctuations as those in the Ghost City!

And the final finger... had a Demonic aura, which was exactly the same as Meng Hao's!

"Ghost, God, Devil, Demon!!" he thought, his mind reeling as he

returned from the vision he had experienced when looking at the world in the frescoes. He began to pant as he looked at the images once again, and yet couldn't enter that special vision he had just been in.

His face was pale white as he stood there for a long period of time, regaining his composure. Finally, he looked up, and his eyes were shining.

"That figure was Allheaven. Perhaps he is not a living being, but... some unique entity. Because of him, the starry sky exists, the heavenly bodies exist, all life exists.... Allheaven, Allheaven....

"Clearly, he died, and was not a being that could last for all eternity. In the end, everything about him became four fingers, which are distinguished by the Ghost, God, Devil and Demon. But what about the Immortal...?

"Where is the Immortal...?" After a long moment of silence, Meng Hao flickered into motion, flashing down the tunnel, burning with the desire to lay eyes on the third set of frescoes.

A few days later, he was still speeding through the ancient tunnel. It almost felt as if he were passing through years of time until finally, there up ahead... was the third stone chamber.

His pupils constricted, and his heart began to beat faster and faster. Almost as soon as he burst into the third stone chamber, he looked around for the frescoes.

As expected, there was a third set of frescoes!

When he laid eyes on them, his mind spun, and he sank into the world depicted therein.

This time, the world within the frescoes depicted a place Meng Hao had seen before. It was a city, in the very middle of which were nine land masses.... This fresco depicted... the necropolis of Patriarch Vast Expanse.

However, this was before it had become a Ghost City, back when it was still a thriving place of the living. There were countless buildings and structures, as well as innumerable cultivators. It was a bustling and flourishing place, clearly in its golden age.

He saw a young man who looked very much like the statue of Patriarch Vast Expanse's clone that he had seen. Perhaps this young man... was Patriarch Vast Expanse himself!

He was sitting cross-legged in the air as countless lightning bolts struck down. Apparently, he was in the middle of facing Tribulation. Down below in the city, countless cultivators were looking on, faces filled with anticipation.

Powerful fluctuations emanated off of the young man, and when Meng Hao sensed them, he was visibly shaken. Those fluctuations exceeded the 9-Essences level, and were half a step into Transcendence. Even more shocking was that this young man's aura... contained Immortal qi!

Absolutely pure Immortal qi!

He was attempting to Transcend, to pass this tribulation as the Immortal!

Meng Hao was panting as he looked at the city and the young man. It was then that he realized that the starry sky of the Vast Expanse that was depicted in this fresco had no mist in it. Instead, it was filled with countless bolts of Tribulation Lightning, seemingly endless amounts that crashed down toward the young man.

As of this moment, Heaven and Earth, the starry sky, and the entire fresco seemed to flash with blinding lightning. Apparently it was completely unwilling to let this person Transcend as the Immortal!

As the destructive Tribulation Lightning descended toward the young man to wipe him out, he rose to his feet and extended his hand as if to blot out the Heavens.

In that moment, a beam of light fell from above, ripping the starry sky apart. A finger descended, a finger that Meng Hao recognized as... one of the four fingers he had seen in the second set of frescoes!

That finger overtook the starry sky, and its descent caused everyone in the city, regardless of the level of their cultivation bases... to begin to tremble violently. Then, they were destroyed in body and soul, completely

eradicated! The only ones who survived were the young man and a handful of other people!

One finger exterminated all of the life in that huge city.

One finger took a thriving world and transformed it into a place of death and corpses.

One finger caused a Realm that was bursting with life force to, in the blink of an eye, be filled with nothing but an aura of death!

The next thing that Meng Hao saw was that young man hovering there amidst the boundless aura of death, letting out a cry filled with the most profound anguish.

Then, the fresco changed. Unexpectedly, the corpses... all began to come to life again. However, their faces were twisted with bizarre smiles, as if they weren't themselves any more. Then, they began to fly up into the air toward the young man, as if to kill him.

The young man's bitter laughter began to transform into wretched wailing.

The vision ended there. It took Meng Hao a long moment to recover. When he did, he took a deep breath, and proceeded along. He wanted to see the fourth set of frescoes. He had the intense premonition that whatever was depicted on them would be... something profoundly shocking and mysterious.

Whatever secret was locked therein might even have something to do with him!

He thought back to the destruction of the Mountain and Sea Realm, to the Demonic qi which had appeared on him, and how it had been said that the Immortal God Continent and the Devil Realm Continent didn't want the Immortal to appear in the Mountain and Sea Realm.

"Similar. Very similar. The only difference is that Patriarch Vast Expanse tried to Transcend as the Immortal, whereas in the Mountain and Sea Realm, the Immortal had only just appeared....

“Was it really the Immortal God and Devil Realm Continents who wanted to destroy the Mountains and Seas, or was it... someone else!?!?”

“Why is there no text description, and why is it only possible to view the images in the fresco once...?”

“What is being guarded against?”

“Allheaven destroyed that whole world....” As Meng Hao flew along toward the fourth stone chamber, his mind spun with countless ideas and thoughts. At the same time, his face grew more and more grim.

By now, he was getting the feeling that the destruction of the Mountain and Sea Realm... might not have been such a simple affair. Apparently... there was some profound secret at play!

And Meng Hao was uncovering a bit of that secret from these wall frescoes!

Chapter 1429: A Deep Look at the Vast Expanse!

Meng Hao's face was grim as he shot through the tunnel at top speed. If there were someone capable of seeing everything beneath the surface of that first land mass, they would see that within the long tunnel, there were four stone chambers.

Meng Hao was currently heading upward through the tunnel toward the surface of the lands, and at the same time, he was rapidly approaching the fourth stone chamber, which was also the final chamber.

His eyes were bloodshot, and he moved at incredible speed. Countless thoughts and ideas ran through his head, and they grew increasingly disorderly. He was getting even more anxious.

Some days later, the fourth stone chamber appeared up ahead of him. He slowed down, coming to a stop just outside the chamber. He stood there quietly for a long moment, taking the time to calm his mind and heart. Then, he stepped into the chamber, eyes glittering.

He absolutely had to see what the frescoes in this fourth chamber depicted.

As soon as he stepped into the chamber and looked at the frescoes, his vision swam. When things became clear, he was looking at pitch blackness.

Everything was completely and utterly black, without even a glimmer of light. It didn't feel like an infinite blackness that stretched out endlessly. Rather, it was like an obstacle, blocking the way ahead, almost like... the end of the starry sky.

Within that darkness, he saw four pillars that seemed to prop up the world. Emanating out from the pillars to spread out in all directions were shocking fluctuations.

When he saw the pillars, he suddenly realized something, and began to pant. He spun, and was shocked to find that behind him was... an

enormous maelstrom.

The maelstrom was so gargantuan that at first glance it looked like a huge sphere. However, closer examination revealed that the maelstrom was actually made up of endless clouds and mist.

As he looked at the spherical maelstrom, he even noticed some places which looked familiar.

“I’m outside... the Vast Expanse....” he murmured.

Suddenly, a desire rose up within him. He focused on one particular area of the maelstrom, and his vision zoomed in, passing through layers upon layers of mist before coming to rest on an area within the Vast Expanse that was rife with an aura of death.

A vortex could be seen there, spinning slowly. As Meng Hao looked at it, he saw... an area that was tattered and torn, filled with corpses, ruin, wreckage, and ash.

“The Mountain and Sea Realm....” he thought, heart stabbing with pain. It was the former location of the Mountain and Sea Realm. But everything that had happened there was nothing more than the past.

After a long moment passed, Meng Hao looked away. Following the tuggings of his heart, his gaze passed in another direction, to a location where a powerful sealing magic was located. A monkey sat cross-legged outside of it, completely oblivious to Meng Hao’s gaze.

Beneath the monkey were... numerous land masses, thirty-three in total. They were the 33 Heavens, like thirty-three walls, beneath which was a vortex. Inside the vortex was a green coffin, upon which rested a butterfly, whose wings floated gently up and down.

The instant he laid eyes on the butterfly, his heart thumped. He could just barely make out his father and mother there, nestled in each other’s arms. His vision zoomed in again, and next he saw a world.

There were many familiar faces in that world. His sister, Sun Hai, and Fatty....

On one particular mountain, he saw a thin woman who was Xu Qing.

He wanted to see more, but inwardly, exhaustion was taking root. His vision swam, and then zoomed back out, as if he were being expelled from the starry sky of the Vast Expanse.

In the last moments before his vision completely faded away, he suddenly looked over at the Vast Expanse School. There, outside of Planet Vast Expanse, was an area where the starry sky was damaged and in ruins. There was no Vast Expanse mist there, only a rift. After looking into that rift, he saw nine land masses that formed into a necropolis!

He was unable to see himself in the stone chamber in the first land mass, but he was able to see a scattered group of people. There was the Sect Leader, the golden-robed young man, the sand-wreathed figure, the Sixth and Eighth Paragons, and all the others....

He could see that in the very center of the first land mass, where the Sect Leader was currently located, was an altar which emanated a unique aura that resembled Transcendence!

Meng Hao was left reeling as his consciousness and sight returned to their original location.

He took a deep breath as he looked at the spherical maelstrom again. Then, mind spinning, he turned once more to look at the four astonishing pillars.

He knew exactly what those four pillars were. He had seen them in the vision from the second set of frescoes. They were the four fingers left behind by Allheaven after his death!

In the vision from the third set of frescoes, he had seen one of those fingers destroy a thriving world and kill all of the lives within it.

“So I am outside the Vast Expanse, and this spherical maelstrom is the Vast Expanse, within which I exist.” Panting, Meng Hao suddenly thought about something he knew which apparently conflicted with what he was seeing.

“The Vast Expanse School is a branch of the Vast Expanse Society, which

exists on the outside. The Ninth Paragon even came from there. But if I am outside the Vast Expanse right now, then where is the Vast Expanse Society...?

“Perhaps I’m in a different time...? But then why would I be able to see the Mountain and Sea Butterfly, and everything else in the Vast Expanse?” Meng Hao frowned. He wanted to get closer to the four pillars, to study them, but when he tried to move, everything turned blurry. After things got clear again, he wasn’t near the four pillars, but back in the fourth stone chamber.

In that moment, the bronze lamp inside of him quieted down. The sense of being called faded away, as if what had been reaching out to the bronze lamp was none other than this fourth set of frescoes.

Now that he had laid eyes on it, the bronze lamp became calm once again.

“If you really are Patriarch Vast Expanse, then the message you wished to pass on to me by leaving these frescoes... has been received.” After a moment, Meng Hao clasped hands and bowed deeply.

Now that he had experienced the visions within the frescoes, he was filled with a deep skepticism regarding the Immortal Gods, the Devil Realm, the Vast Expanse, and the destruction of the Mountain and Sea Realm.

There was also a name he would not be forgetting. Allheaven!

And there was that saying, ‘Allheaven fears the Immortal!’

Meng Hao took a deep breath and rose to his feet. After closing his eyes, he calmed himself, then took the skepticism, the doubts and the misgivings, and tucked them away deep inside his heart. When he opened his eyes, they seemed just like they had been before he had experienced the visions. With that, he left the chamber.

Proceeding along, he soon reached the end of the tunnel, where a staircase led up to ground level. As he emerged, he looked around to find ruins stretching out around him in all directions.

He was on the outer edge of the first land mass, an area filled with broken buildings and ruined structures. Everything was quiet, except for a whispering breeze which occasionally picked up the dust and carried it off into the distance.

Before experiencing the visions, Meng Hao's third eye had enabled him to see the Ghost City as it was in the present. But now, after having seen it when it was flourishing and alive, looking around at what remained of it caused him to sigh. Subconsciously, he looked up into the sky.

"That finger descended from above. One finger... wiped out all life here." As Meng Hao stood there quietly, he realized how insignificant he was, and at the same time, was as focused and determined as ever.

After another moment passed, Meng Hao turned, transforming into a beam of light that shot at high speed across the surface of the land mass. This location was no longer unfamiliar to him; after seeing this world in his vision, he had come to know it well, as well as where the others were located within it. In fact, after looking at the ruins and the mountains around him, he quickly determined his exact location.

"The Sect Leader and the others are at the altar in the center of the land mass. Apparently... that is their target destination.

"The aura of Transcendence...." As he flew along, his eyes glittered coldly, and he turned to look toward the east. "I remember that the Sixth Paragon was in that area. He shouldn't be very far off."

Snorting coldly, he changed directions to head toward the location of the Sixth Paragon.

Meng Hao was not the type of person who enjoyed living for hatred and revenge. However, the Sixth Paragon had provoked him three times, and the last time had been with killing intent.

Therefore, Meng Hao would kill him, along with the Eighth Paragon and... the golden-robed young man!

It was a decision he made without the slightest hesitation or misgiving. After experiencing the visions he just had, he seemed calm on the inside,

but was actually deeply anxious. That anxiety in turn unleashed a deep skepticism within him, something that stemmed from his guilt over the destruction of the Mountain and Sea Realm.

That skepticism and that anxiety filled him with the desire to kill!

At the moment, the Sixth Paragon was one of the targets on his list.

Meng Hao shot through the air like lightning, doing nothing to mask his aura. His cultivation base surged with power, becoming a raging tempest that formed into a face. It was a ferocious semblance of his own by about seventy percent. However, this face had a horn protruding from its forehead, and appeared to be as cold as ice. It was brutal, and shockingly Demonic.

Off in the distance, the Sixth Paragon was traveling through the ruins with his sole surviving subordinate, an 8-Essences Paragon. He was heading toward the central altar, but was simultaneously searching for other good fortune. Suddenly, his face fell, and he looked up to see the shocking face that resembled Meng Hao's speeding toward him, bursting with a murderous aura.

"Dammit, you're actually not dead!!" His face fell as he sensed the killing intent coming from Meng Hao. His scalp tingled as he thought of the madness with which Meng Hao fought. Gasping, and without the slightest hesitation, he pulled out a jade slip to contact the golden-robed young man and the Eighth Paragon. Then he turned, leaving behind afterimages as he went all-out in an attempt to escape.

Even as the Sixth Paragon fled, Meng Hao's voice echoed out like thunder behind him, "You brought this upon yourself, old man!"

Chapter 1430: Crushing the Sixth Paragon!

As the rumbling sounds echoed out, the Sixth Paragon's face fell. Even as he teleported backward in retreat, the space he had just occupied was crushed and destroyed.

The ground quaked and crumbled as a huge crater opened up. As Meng Hao shot forward like lightning, the vicious Demon face which surrounded him picked up speed. In the blink of an eye, it was bearing down on the Sixth Paragon, radiating Demonic qi which caused everything to shake, and bright colors to flash in the area.

The Sixth Paragon's pupils constricted, and he waved his hand out in a grasping motion. A long banner appeared in his hand, upon which were depicted the images of numerous roaring, wild beasts. Among the countless types of creatures, there were even dragons!

"All-Consuming Beast Swarm!" he screamed, waving the banner through the air. Instantly, the countless creatures inside the banner surged out, roaring. It was a sea of beasts which swept out toward the fierce Demon face.

In the blink of an eye, the two forces slammed into each other, resulting in a massive explosion which shattered the surrounding ruins and crushed the air. It was almost like two enormous mountains had collided, causing the ground to quake and a huge cloud of dust to rise up!

BOOM!

Meng Hao was shaking visibly, but at the same time, the Sixth Paragon coughed up a huge mouthful of blood, and his banner was shredded to pieces.

It was a critical moment in the fight. The Sixth Paragon took advantage of it to speed off, coughing up blood the entire time. Then, popping sounds could be heard as numerous ghost images appeared. Tens of thousands of shadows resembling the Sixth Paragon all began to scatter in different directions, making it almost impossible to determine which was his true self.

The Sixth Paragon had tangled with Meng Hao in the past, and had long since come to fear him. Therefore, he had no intention of fighting a protracted battle, and immediately attempted to flee.

Meng Hao let out a cold harrumph, and opened his third eye. The world changed into that of the Ghost City, wherein countless figures could be seen. At the same time, Meng Hao was instantly able to determine which among the tens of thousands of shadows was the Sixth Paragon's true self.

"You can't get away," he said coldly. As his voice echoed out, he flickered into motion, reappearing directly in front of one of the shadows. Then, he unleashed a fist strike.

It was the God-Slaying Fist!

A boom rang out as the shadow shattered, and the Sixth Paragon emerged from within, face ashen. He immediately fell back at top speed, a vicious expression gleaming in his eyes. However, before he could escape, Meng Hao waved his finger, unleashing the Eighth Demon Sealing Hex.

Because of Meng Hao's current battle prowess, the Eighth Hex was now strong enough to affect even 9-Essences Paragons. The Sixth Paragon's face fell as he suddenly lurched to a halt. Although he recovered almost immediately, a brief moment of immobility like that could be an eternity in a fight like this.

A boom rang out as Meng Hao launched another punch toward the Sixth Paragon. However, in that instant, the Sixth Paragon's skin turned bright red, and a glow like that of blood emanated out, transforming into a shield which blocked the punch.

Meng Hao's fist slammed into the blood-colored shield, causing the shield to distort, and the Sixth Paragon to stagger backward.

However, even as he did, Meng Hao launched another fist strike, then another. Booms echoed out as the blood-colored shield struggled to hold. When the third successive fist strike hit it, the shield shattered, and the fist landed onto the Sixth Paragon's chest.

Blood sprayed out of his mouth, and a sensation of numbness swept over

him like flood waters. Even his cultivation base teetered unstably, and his soul trembled.

“Dammit, Jin Yunshan is obviously aware that I need help, but isn’t responding. Old Eighth is the only one on the way. He’s not too far away, but still needs time to get here!!

“This Meng character is not only a lunatic, he also excels at seizing the initiative in battle. I can’t even use a full eighty percent of my power because he never gives me a chance to do anything!” As Meng Hao closed in again, the Sixth Paragon let out an enraged roar. By this point, he knew that it wasn’t very likely he would be able to extricate himself from the fighting. Clearly, Meng Hao was completely focused on exterminating him.

In that case, it would be better to die fighting than to run away. In fact, his only hope lay in drawing out the fighting long enough for the Eighth Patriarch to arrive. Then the two of them could either fight or flee together. Either way, they could change the situation.

“Meng Hao, you push things too far!” he howled. His body was still bright red as he performed a double-handed incantation gesture. Instantly, billowing clouds appeared behind him as he unleashed all of his Essence power. It transformed into a huge black head which lunged toward Meng Hao as if to swallow him whole.

Meng Hao’s expression was icy cold as he flickered into motion, a streak of azure light that transformed into an azure roc. The roc slammed into the black head, piercing through it and destroying it. The Sixth Paragon let out a miserable shriek as blood spurted from various wounds. Even as he prepared to fall back, the azure roc teleported, appearing directly in front of him and then shooting forward to blast through his body.

It was an intense, deadly situation. The Sixth Paragon let out a roar of rage, hands flashing in a double-handed incantation gesture that caused all of the light around him to vanish. Everything turned black as he called upon his ninth Essence, that of the darkness of night.

The darkness of night was capable of crushing all light, of

superimposing the color black onto everything and anything. All existence could be wiped out. This Essence magic was the Sixth Paragon's trump card, and having been forced into the corner he was in, he unleashed it without any warning.

However, even as the Essence exploded out, causing Heaven and Earth to turn dark, Meng Hao's eyes flickered. He could sense the boundless killing intent that surrounded him. His body felt as if something else were controlling it, as if a boundless coldness was surrounding him and trying to bore inside of him to wipe away his soul.

Meng Hao suddenly laughed and said, "Someone once tried to corrupt my body, to defile my soul. I let her, so that she could be happy and at ease. And now you're trying use a similar Essence magic against me...."

"This Essence of the darkness of night can cover over Heaven and Earth. However, the Demonic qi within me can cover over the Vast Expanse...." With that, Meng Hao ceased struggling, and allowed the darkness of night to enter his body. However, the process went too slowly for his taste, so he opened his mouth and intentionally sucked it in.

Almost immediately, the darkness of night began to tremble. In the blink of an eye, Meng Hao had turned into a black hole. Everything trembled as boundless darkness... poured into his mouth!!

The sight was completely shocking, leaving the Sixth Paragon feeling as if he had been struck by lightning. His eyes shone with disbelief and shock as he watched Meng Hao sucking the darkness of night into his mouth. Meng Hao's hair whipped about as he began to emanate an aura that the Sixth Paragon had never encountered before in his entire life.

It was an evil aura, a multifarious aura. It was like an Immortal, and yet also like a God, and at the same time, like a Devil. It changed back and forth rapidly, causing Heaven and Earth to tremble. As of this moment, Meng Hao was like the Dao of a world, and when he flicked his sleeve, everything began to collapse.

Even more shocking to the Sixth Paragon was that he suddenly realized that his ninth Essence... was vanishing from inside of him.

“C-consuming... consuming Essence? Y-y-you...” The Sixth Paragon was scared out of his mind. Eyes gleaming with rage, he howled as he fell back. As of this moment, he abandoned all thoughts of tangling with Meng Hao. Instead, he tried to escape with all the speed he could muster, leaving a series of afterimages behind him as he fled.

Meng Hao’s mouth twisted into a grim smile. Even as the Sixth Paragon began to flee, Meng Hao took three steps forward, each one of which caused everything to shake violently.

After three steps, his energy had risen to a level that seemed to supercede the entire world. Suddenly, a sensation of indescribable deadly crisis filled the Sixth Paragon.

“He’s going to kill me!!” he thought. He slapped his hand down onto his head. A droning sound filled his mind as he unleashed an unknown secret magic. Green smoke rose up from his red skin, increasing his speed dramatically. In the briefest of instants, he was 500 kilometers away.

Killing intent flickered in Meng Hao’s eyes as he took four more steps. With each step, Heaven and Earth trembled. The fourth step took him 500 kilometers forward. Then he took the fifth and sixth steps, which were as equally grand and dramatic.

The Sixth Paragon’s face was ashen, and the sensation of deadly crisis grew more intense. He had completely lost any fighting spirit, and could sense the trump card that was his ninth Essence fading away, which caused his scalp to tingle. Then he sensed Meng Hao’s energy rising, and his mind began to reel as he realized that it almost felt as if he were fighting a peak 9-Essences cultivator like the Sect Leader or Jin Yunshan.

“Dammit!” he shrieked. “That’s... that’s the Seven God Steps of the Devil Realm!!” He knew that the most powerful explosion of energy from the Seven God Steps came from the seventh step. That raised one’s mind, life force, cultivation base and everything else to a higher level. In the blink of an eye, it would lead to an explosive, exponential increase in battle prowess.

As Meng Hao took that seventh step, the Sixth Paragon’s vision turned

red. However, in that moment of deadly crisis, a beam of light appeared off in the distance, shooting toward them at high speed.

The Eighth Paragon had arrived!

“Old Ninth, what are you doing? How dare you attempt to harm fellow sect members. Stand down immediately!!” The Eighth Paragon’s voice echoed like thunder, and rumbling sounds caused even the clouds to vibrate as he shot forward.

The Sixth Paragon’s eyes went wild with joy, and he immediately sped in the direction of the Eighth Paragon. It was in that moment that Meng Hao completed his seventh step!

Heaven and Earth shook. The sky took the shape of Meng Hao’s face, and the lands turned black. A profoundly murderous aura filled the area, converging upon Meng Hao’s right hand in the form of the Eighth Hex Essence!

It was... Spatial Hexing!

Shockingly, he was preparing to completely and thoroughly seal the Sixth Paragon, to seal the space around him, to seal his cultivation base, and to seal... his life!

As soon as the sealing mark appeared, the incoming Eighth Paragon’s face fell.

“Meng Hao, are you looking to die?!?!” By this point, he didn’t even call Meng Hao by the title of Ninth Paragon, but rather, by his true name!

The Sixth Paragon’s mind was spinning, and he was completely overwhelmed by the sensation of crisis. It was as if Meng Hao had superseded the entire world, and as his right hand descended, the Sixth Paragon screamed.

“You’ll never seal me, Meng Hao!!” Apparently throwing caution to the wind, he chose to do the only thing he was capable of doing at this juncture... detonating one of his Essences!

Chapter 1431: One Flees, Terrified!

The Heavens roiled as boundless clouds and mist converged, forming an enormous hand that blotted out the sky. It was as if this hand had replaced the Heavens, radiating an enormous, destructive sealing power!

Apparently, when this hand descended, it could seal one's cultivation base, life force, soul... everything!

The Heaven-shaking, Earth-shattering sight caused the Sixth Paragon's mind to reel. An unprecedented feeling of danger rose up in his heart; he was very well aware that unless he came up with some powerful countermeasure, he would definitely die!!

Within the starry skies of the Vast Expanse, 9-Essences Paragons were essentially invincible, with the exception of when they were within places like this necropolis, or perhaps when facing the old eccentrics who were peak 9-Essences Paragons. And yet, as of this moment, the shadow of death loomed large within the heart of the Sixth Paragon.

He let out a miserable howl. At this critical point in the fighting, it was without hesitation that he chose his only remaining option, to... detonate one of his Essences!!

The cost would be enormous. For the next ten thousand years, he would no longer wield the power of 9-Essences, but 8-Essences.

He was detonating an Essence in exchange for a chance to survive. If he could just avoid this deadly sealing mark, then he could join forces with the Eighth Paragon. At the very least, his cultivation base drop would result in being able to live!!

"Meng Hao!" the Sixth Paragon howled, his voice tinged with venomous rage. Even as his voice echoed out, he spread his hands wide, causing a black and white windstorm to kick up. As it spun, it turned gray, and terrifying pulses of Essence aura appeared. They were so powerful that they could cause any 8-Essences Paragon to tremble; that was how far the Sixth Paragon was willing to go in his madness to defend against Meng Hao.

It was a shocking sight to see the windstorm whipping through the air toward the enormous Heavenly hand.

When they slammed into each other, it was like the land below smashing into the sky above. Above the Heavenly hand was Meng Hao, clothes whipping about, murderous aura radiating out, and expression icy. Down below was the Earthly windstorm, beneath which was the maddened Sixth Paragon, his hair and clothing in disarray.

BOOOOOOOOOOMMM!

All of this takes some time to describe, but actually happened in the space of a few breaths. In the blink of an eye, the enormous hand and the wild windstorm... slammed into each other.

The resulting explosion seemed loud enough to destroy Heaven and Earth. It was as if everything in existence were being ripped to shreds!

The Sixth Paragon screamed miserably as he detonated that single Essence. Although it was only one, to him, detonating that one Essence was like detonating all nine. Rumbling sounds rose up as the windstorm roared like a dragon, attempting to consume the hand.

No matter how madly that windstorm screamed, though, the Heavenly hand which contained Meng Hao's sealing mark continued to shove downward. The windstorm shattered, and the power of the Sixth Paragon's exploding Essence transformed into a shockwave that blasted out in all directions. A huge crater opened up down below, and although the hand was not completely destroyed, four of the fingers were wiped away in the explosion.

The final finger proceeded onward unhindered. However, it had lost its power of sealing. The Sixth Paragon coughed up blood, and he suddenly seemed to age by a thousand years, leaving his face pale. He felt unprecedentedly weak, but a vicious expression appeared on his face, and his eyes radiated hatred as he backed up, laughing.

"You can't kill me, Meng Hao! I won't forget the enmity which you have sown this day!!" The hatred for Meng Hao which had been building up in the Sixth Paragon had reached a pinnacle. However, even as he spoke, he

borrowed force from the explosion, and drew upon all the power he could muster, to shoot toward the Eighth Paragon.

Likewise, the Eighth Paragon was speeding toward him. Once the two of them joined forces, then even Meng Hao with his current level of battle prowess would not be able to fight them.

Meng Hao knew that, the Sixth Paragon knew it, and so did the Eighth Paragon.

Seeing that the deadly battle was about to conclude, even the Eighth Paragon sighed with relief. In his estimation, unless Meng Hao was a complete fool, he would realize that he couldn't continue fighting. If he did, he would be putting himself in a very bad position. After all, the shockwaves which would spread out because of a fight against two Paragons would eventually be detected by the other Paragons, and when that happened, the fight definitely couldn't continue.

Because of that, there was no possible way for the Eighth Paragon to be able to imagine what happened next. What he saw could not possibly have been more of a shock to him.

What he had taken to be a complete and utter impossibility, was suddenly completely possible!

Meng Hao hovered there in the sky, looking coldly down at the retreating Sixth Paragon, as well as the Eighth Paragon, both of whom were racing toward each other at top speed.

"If I say that I'm going to kill you, then kill you I shall," he said, voice cool and calm. His words were very similar to the ones he had spoken some time earlier to the Sixth Paragon about leaving his mark on him.

As his voice echoed out, the Sixth Paragon's heart began to pound strangely within him.

It was at that point that Meng Hao lifted his right foot and then took a step forward. When his foot landed, the Essence of time erupted around him. He began to walk forward in a bizarre fashion, and as he did, the Essence of time around him began to grow stronger. In the blink of an eye,

the world around him was affected, as was time!

As he took his final step, he vanished. Simultaneously, time began to move backward in the area. Not even the willpower of the Sixth Paragon could do anything to resist the effect. A moment ago, he had been speeding toward the Eighth Paragon, but now it was the opposite. He still had the same look of joy on his face, and his heart was still thumping as he suddenly began... to move backward!!

From the perspective of the Eighth Paragon, it looked like he was retreating. In the blink of an eye, the Sixth Paragon was pulled far away from the Eighth Paragon.

Next, the explosion caused by the collision of the Essence detonation and the Heavenly hand was suddenly sucked back in. It was as if everything within the stream of time were being affected!

It was at this point that Meng Hao suddenly appeared in front of the Sixth Paragon. It was as if Meng Hao could simply walk through time to any point of his choosing. The sight caused the Eighth Paragon to suddenly stop in place, scalp tingling in shock, crashes like thunder echoing in his mind.

“Time... the Essence of time!! No, the Essence of time doesn’t have an aura like that. That’s... that’s....” The Eighth Paragon sucked in a deep breath. His mind spun as he watched Meng Hao appear in front of the Sixth Paragon, then reach out and touch the man’s forehead. Then his hand moved, tracing a box in the air around the Sixth Paragon.

A boom rang out as the Sixth Paragon trembled; from start to finish, he was completely incapable of resisting what was happening. It was almost as if he didn’t even see Meng Hao right there in front of him.

He didn’t fight back at all as a field of light emanating from Meng Hao’s hand covered him. His body was sealed, his cultivation base was sealed, and his soul was sealed. Everything about him was sealed!

Rumbling could be heard as the Sixth Paragon transformed into... a painting, which floated down onto Meng Hao’s palm!

Meng Hao took hold of the painting. His cheeks were a bit flushed, but his eyes were icy cold as he turned and looked at the Eighth Paragon.

The Eighth Paragon's mind was spinning, and he began to tremble. A look of utter incredulity covered his face, and terror exploded up inside of him.

"That's... that's a bit of Daosource aura, in the form of the Daosource of time!!" The Eighth Paragon shook as icy coldness spread up his spine and filled his body. Then he screamed and fled.

Actually, this man was well aware of how powerful Meng Hao was. Even before entering the necropolis, his fight with the Sixth Paragon had utterly proven how terrifying he was. As such, the Eighth Paragon had no desire to offend him. However, because of the orders of the golden-robed young man, Jin Yunshan, he had had no choice but to attack and try to kill Meng Hao on the bridge.

He, as well as everyone else, had assumed Meng Hao to be dead. After all, nobody could fall into that abyss and survive. How could he ever have imagined that Meng Hao would still be alive!?

After receiving the message from the Sixth Paragon requesting help, he had come over as quickly as possible. Upon arriving, he had witnessed a battle that was completely and utterly shocking. Then he saw Meng Hao take the impossible and make it completely possible. And he also saw something that he was sure exceeded Essence, an amalgamation of space and time that exhibited a trace of the properties of Daosource which created... a terrifying sealing mark!

"Planning to run?" Meng Hao asked coolly. As soon as the words left his mouth, the Eighth Paragon's right hand shot up, and he struck the top of his head. Rumbling sounds could be heard as his body withered up; massive amounts of life force exploded out, and he even sacrificed some of his longevity in exchange for a blinding burst of speed. In the blink of an eye, he was a huge distance away.

He was afraid, terrified even. All Meng Hao had to do was say one thing, and the Eighth Paragon went all out to flee. After all, he had witnessed the

fate of the Sixth Paragon.

Meng Hao stared in shock. The Sixth Paragon's method of fleeing couldn't even compare to the Eighth Paragon's. The Eighth Paragon was gone without a trace, and obviously, it wouldn't be possible to catch up in a short period of time.

Meng Hao frowned. Obviously... he terrified the Eighth Paragon so much he had simply fled.

“Well, there's no rush. I'll settle accounts slow and steady. He can run, but I know where everyone is heading anyway.” After a moment, Meng Hao snorted coldly and then took a step forward, heading to the location he had seen when outside of the Vast Expanse: the central region where the golden-robed young man and everyone else was waiting.

Chapter 1432: Transcendence Dais!

After experiencing the destruction of the Mountain and Sea Realm, Meng Hao had become more hateful and vindictive. His heart festered with rancor, and the thirst for revenge burned in his blood. Much of that was because he had been defiled, transformed from Immortal into Demon, and had become somewhat extreme and even paranoid.

The current Meng Hao was a completely different person than the young scholar who had stood atop Mount Daqing in the State of Zhao.

His bashfulness was nowhere to be seen now; there was only viciousness. He smiled less frequently, and was filled with icy coldness. His was a world that had long since been overtaken by a murderous aura.

That was not his wish, nor his fundamental nature. But fate had taken hold, and the things he had experienced were like a merciless blade that slashed away at him, completely transforming him.

Sealing the Sixth Paragon was only the beginning. He planned to put an end to all of those who had shown hostility to him. As such, he would not let the Eighth Paragon off the hook. Even though the man had only attacked him once, to Meng Hao, once was enough. He would not give him a second opportunity to do so.

Another person on Meng Hao's list of people to kill was the golden-robed young man, Jin Yunshan. Although Meng Hao wasn't completely certain that he qualified to attack someone of such a level right now, that didn't matter.

He wasn't of a mind to investigate why things had happened the way they did. To him, only one thing was important: If you don't mess with me, I won't mess with you. But if you do mess with me, then I will wipe you out of existence!

Meng Hao's face was grim as he sped through the air in a beam of bright light. He moved so fast that the only sound heard was something like the crack of thunder; he was actually not visible within the beam, which resembled an arrow as it shot forward.

He split the sky, moving faster and faster, the sound of his passage echoing back and forth. Invisible shockwaves spread out, causing the land to shake and the air to distort.

It was a grand and amazing sight!

As he chased down the Eighth Paragon, he was able to determine that the man was most definitely heading in the same direction Meng Hao wished to head... toward the center of this first land mass of the necropolis!

As time went on, Meng Hao moved faster and faster, and the evidence of his passage was detectable far and wide.

The Eighth Paragon was up ahead, shaking in his boots. He was completely terrified, and was using all the power at his disposal to flee at top speed. He continued to unleash secret magics, causing his body to wither up, but propelling himself forward at maddening speed.

“Dammit, dammit, DAMMIT...!” he cursed inwardly. He couldn’t be more regretful of what had happened, how he had provoked Meng Hao. He could never have imagined that Meng Hao would actually possess a bit of the aura of the Daosource. Although it was only a sliver, to someone in the 9-Essences level, that was a profoundly threatening force.

“He’s going to kill me!!” That was the thought which continued to run through the man’s head. Meng Hao wanted to kill him so much that there was no other option for him other than to flee. He didn’t even dare to turn around and try to launch a preemptive counterstrike. He had to rely on the burning of his life force to gain greater speed. His only hope was to reach the location of the Sect Leader and Jin Yunshan, the place where everyone was to meet back up. If Meng Hao tried to kill him in a location such as that, it would be extremely difficult considering how many people would be there to interfere.

Rumbling could be heard as the Eighth Paragon bit his tongue, spit out some blood, and accelerated once more.

Behind him was Meng Hao, his expression icy, pursuing him relentlessly.

It wasn't that the Eighth Paragon had forgotten to try to send distress signals via jade slip. He had. However, he quickly realized that sending such messages was like throwing a stone statue of a bull into the sea. Not a single reply ever came back.

His heart was filled with bitterness, and also dread.

A moment later, lightning crashed down around him. Howling, he passed through the lightning, coming out on the other side coughing up blood. Without even looking back, he pushed onward.

Meng Hao appeared moments later. He collected the lightning up, a cold smile on his face as he continued to chase down his prey.

Time passed slowly. Hunter and quarry slowly drew closer and closer to the central region.

In the middle of the first land mass was an ancient altar, fully 30,000 meters in height. The four corners were decorated with fierce dragon carvings, and it almost looked like a pagoda, stretching high up into the sky.

It was pitch black in color, and emanated a sensation of an ancient era. It was almost as if it had existed within the stream of time for countless years. Ripples pulsed out from the altar, merging into Heaven and Earth, making it seem as if it were part of the entire land mass upon which it stood, and yet somehow in sync with the necropolis itself.

The people from the Vast Expanse School were located in various locations surrounding the black altar, looking at it excitedly. There on the altar itself, three people sat cross-legged. One of those people was the young man in the golden robe, Jin Yunshan!

Another was gaunt and sallow, surrounded by a layer of swirling sand which made it difficult to see him clearly. It was none other than Sha Jiudong!

The last person was the Sect Leader himself.

The three of them sat at the highest point on the altar, various expressions flashing across their faces. Occasionally they appeared to be

wild with joy, while at other times they looked confused. Sometimes they would even tremble. Gradually, all of them were beginning to form tiny bits of... Daosource aura!!

The other cultivators from the Vast Expanse School were discussing the goings-on.

“According to the ancient records, the necropolis has nine land masses, each one of which has a Transcendence Dais. Any cultivator who seeks enlightenment on that altar can begin to grasp the path to Transcendence!”

“Those records were absolutely correct!”

“The Sect Leader, along with Fellow Daoists Sha and Jin, were the first to step onto the altar. They’ve already been seeking enlightenment for far longer than five days!”

“During that time, the Daosource aura on them has gradually grown stronger. This place... definitely contains the method for Transcending!!”

“In the ancient records, it says that the altars in each of the nine land masses of the necropolis can add ten percent to one’s chances of Transcending. If you add the altars from all the different land masses together... then doesn’t that mean that if you gained enlightenment in all nine, then... you would have a ninety percent chance of Transcending successfully, and entering the Daosource Realm!?!?” Everyone from the Vast Expanse School stood outside the altar, eyes glittering with fervor. This was the entire reason they had come to this place: Transcendence.

To be more accurate, the method for Transcendence was by means of the nine altars within the necropolis!

It was at this point, when the Sect Leader and the other two peak 9-Essences experts were in the process of seeking enlightenment, and their Daosource aura was growing clearer and stronger, that a beam of light appeared off in the distance, closing in on the area with maddening speed. At the same time, a desperate voice echoed out.

“Help me!! Fellow Daoists, please help me!!!” The voice sounded

desperate and weak. Upon closer examination, the Eighth Paragon could clearly be seen, hair in disarray, body gaunt and withered. His eyes were bloodshot, and his aura unstable as he screamed for help.

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Important note: This chapter marks the beginning of a special “seven chapters in one day” marathon that Er Gen did. All of the chapters are shorter than usual, which was how he accomplished that. Expect the next few chapters to be short.

Chapter 1433: Killing With Witnesses!

His voice completely shattered the mood in the area. The people from the Vast Expanse School all turned their heads, and when they saw that it was the Eighth Paragon heading in their direction, their faces flickered.

What caused such a reaction was not just the desperate state the Eighth Paragon was in, but something else, something shocking that wasn't immediately noticeable.

They had been studying the altar so intently that they didn't notice what else was happening in the area. Apparently... their divine sense had been sealed, and their five senses interfered with, although that in itself was difficult to detect.

It wasn't a divine ability from Meng Hao, but rather, some strange effect that came from standing near the altar!

It was because they were near the altar that they hadn't received any of the messages from the Eighth Paragon!

"It's Old Eighth!"

"He was in the same area as Old Sixth. What did he run into that left him in such bad condition!?!?" Everyone was shaken. The terrifying nature of the necropolis left a lingering fear within their hearts. And yet, it was in this moment that they caught sight of another beam of light off in the distance!

There within that beam of light was Meng Hao, looking like a fiendish killer!!

"It's the Ninth Paragon!!"

"He's not actually dead!!" Everyone was shocked, but there was little time for them to ponder why he hadn't perished after falling into the abyss. Here he was, chasing down the beleaguered Eighth Paragon, clearly intent on killing him.

The Eighth Paragon let out a miserable shriek as the air around him distorted, and a boom rang out, causing blood to spray out of his mouth.

Afterward, he shot toward the group with even greater speed.

“Help me!! He killed Old Sixth. I saw him do it! He killed Old Sixth!!” His voice rang out, filled with unprecedented levels of anxiety and nervousness. A few of the other Paragons had already stepped forward and were preparing to stop Meng Hao. There was no way they would just look on while the Eighth Paragon was killed. They had done the same thing with Meng Hao, and it had nothing to do with favor or disfavor.

When they heard the Eighth Paragon’s claim that the Sixth Paragon had already been killed by Meng Hao, their faces flickered, and they all flew forward to intervene!

“Old Ninth, stay your hand immediately!!”

“We’re all Paragons of the Vast Expanse School. We’re here to search for the good fortune of Transcendence. There’s no reason to be fighting and killing each other!!”

Even as they flew forth to block Meng Hao, Meng Hao’s eyes glittered, and he looked over at Jin Yunshan among the group of three on the altar. Meng Hao could sense the profoundly ancient nature of the altar, and could also detect the traces of Daosource aura on them.

That in itself caused his mind to spin. Seeing this location from outside of the Vast Expanse, and actually being here to feel it, were two completely different matters. Now he realized that the reason the Sect Leader and the others had come to the necropolis, the so-called method of Transcendence they were looking for, was this altar!

“Ah, so these altars are the way to Transcend!” he thought. In the entire Vast Expanse, only a few people had ever reached that ultimate pinnacle, Transcendence.

For there to be a location such as this, which aided in the seeking of enlightenment of Transcendence, caused Meng Hao to come to the conclusion that the other land masses must also have similar altars. Nine land masses meant nine altars.

If that was the case, then... how did the altars come to be created?!?!?

Many questions popped up in Meng Hao's mind, causing his eyes to flicker. However, there was no time to ponder the matter. He quickly reached out with his right hand and pointed at the fleeing Eighth Paragon.

That gesture caused Demon Sealing Hexing magic to appear. Rumbling sounds could be heard as the Eighth Paragon trembled, during which time Meng Hao flickered into motion. Azure light rose up from him, which suddenly turned black. He transformed into a black roc, shooting lightning-like through the air to appear right behind the Eighth Paragon.

At that point, it didn't matter that the other Paragons were trying to intervene. None of them could move as fast as Meng Hao just had. Without any hesitation, he slashed out at the fleeing, weakened Eighth Paragon.

A boom rang out, and the Eighth Paragon let out a bloodcurdling scream. Blood spurted out of various wounds, but he continued to shoot toward the altar.

Meng Hao was in hot pursuit, but the other Paragons seemed to be on the verge of arriving and blocking his path. Meng Hao's eyes flickered coldly, and his cultivation base surged. Essence power erupted out, transforming into a vortex, a windstorm that swept out in all directions. At the same time, Meng Hao's cold voice could be heard, "Ladies and gentlemen, I have no enmity with you. But this Eighth Paragon tried to do me harm. It's a personal matter, so please don't meddle. I demand that this man die!"

His voice echoed out from within the windstorm with complete and utter determination.

The other Paragons, including Shangguan Hong, frowned, and subconsciously stopped in place. In that moment, Meng Hao shot forward with a burst of speed, yet again closing the gap between himself and the Eighth Paragon.

The Eighth Paragon stared in shock. Trembling, he looked to his last source of hope, the golden-robed young man on top of the altar.

"Fellow Daoist Jin, save me!!"

Roc-form Meng Hao snorted coldly. As he closed in, he performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, and unleashed numerous Hexing magics. Blood sprayed out of the Eighth Paragon's mouth as the Hexing magics landed on him. Gritting his teeth, he pushed onward toward the altar. Just when he was about to set foot onto the altar itself, Meng Hao's right hand flashed with another incantation gesture, and he waved his finger. That was when the Hexing magic began to literally explode!

Eight Hexes were combined together, although it happened inside of the Eighth Paragon's body, and was not visible! Furthermore, this was not something Meng Hao had done only in this moment; he had been preparing the Hexing magic and sending it into the Eighth Paragon during the entire chase.

He wanted to kill the Eighth Paragon, and he wanted to do it right in front of the golden-robed Jin Yunshan, as a warning to all of the other people in the Vast Expanse School. It was a warning which said... Don't provoke me!

Now, the moment had come to accomplish that goal. The Eighth Paragon screamed as numerous flows of qi battered about within him. His body began to swell, and the shadow of death exploded out within him.

His expression was one of terror and astonishment as he wailed, "Fellow Daoist Jin!!!"

As soon as the words left his mouth, Jin Yunshan's eyes opened. They glittered like freezing blades as he turned to stare at Meng Hao.

"Do you dare?!"

Chapter 1434: Battling Jin Yunshan!

“I’ve heard that a lot in my life, you know,” Meng Hao said coolly. “When the critical moment arrives, people love to say ‘do you dare?’ Apparently, they think it actually stops people from doing something.

“I always answer in the same way....”

His right hand flashed with an incantation gesture, and then he waved his finger toward the Eighth Paragon. It was as if a fuse had been lit. Rumbling sounds echoed out as the Eighth Paragon’s body swelled even larger, and then exploded with a huge bang.

Blood and gore splashed everywhere, becoming a rain that fell down onto the altar. It didn’t touch the Sect Leader, but landed all over Sha Jiudong and Jin Yunshan!

Jin Yunshan’s face couldn’t be grimmer as he stared at Meng Hao, killing intent swirling in his eyes.

“Why don’t you say it again.” Meng Hao hovered in midair, looking coldly at Jin Yunshan. Truth be told, the only reason the Eighth Paragon fell so easily was because the long chase gave Meng Hao plenty of time to prepare. The end result was that he cut him down quickly and efficiently. Meng Hao said he would kill him, then followed up immediately!

It was all because he had buried his Hexing magics inside the man one by one, resulting in that final shocking scene.

Silence reigned. Shangguan Hong and the other Paragons looked on silently, mixed emotions visible in their eyes as they looked at Meng Hao. Just now, Meng Hao had used his actions, not just his words, to explain to everyone what exactly it meant to be domineering!

Jin Yunshan suddenly laughed in a very sinister fashion. As the sound echoed out, he slowly stood, eyes growing even icier as he stared at Meng Hao.

“You killed the Sixth and Eighth Paragons, so now you want to kill me?” Colors flashed in the sky and a huge wind kicked up. Everything twisted

and distorted as an enormous, 5,000-kilometer windstorm appeared.

Everyone from the Vast Expanse School had serious expressions on their faces as they slowly backed up, not daring to get close to the enraged Jin Yunshan.

They were all aware that although Jin Yunshan looked like a young man, he had actually practiced cultivation for ages upon ages, and was in fact on almost equal footing with the Sect Leader.

He had an unstable personality inclined to fits of rage, and was incredibly vicious. The louder he laughed, the more infuriated he was.

“That’s exactly what I want,” Meng Hao said coolly.

When Jin Yunshan heard Meng Hao’s response, it was as if he had just heard the most hilarious joke in the entire world. He threw his head back and laughed uproariously. At the same time, lightning crackled in the sky and thunder boomed. Jin Yunshan suddenly stepped forward, turning into a blur of afterimages. The space between him and Meng Hao seemed to collapse, and countless rifts opened up.

Jin Yunshan moved so quickly that apparently the air couldn’t withstand the speed and was destroyed. In the blink of an eye, he was directly in front of Meng Hao.

“You’re just a stray dog with no home to go back to, and you dare to challenge me to a fight?!” Jin Yunshan reached out and stabbed his finger toward Meng Hao’s chest.

His finger immediately erupted with the intense power of a peak 9-Essences cultivation base. Jin Yunshan did not underestimate opponents in battle; he unleashed all of the power he had at his disposal.

Although he seemed to be in a fury, he was actually in complete control of his emotions. He realized that Meng Hao had killed the Eighth Paragon in an attempt to rile him mentally. To cultivators of this level, something like that could prove to be fatal!

In fact, the words he had spoken to Meng Hao just now had likewise been intended to sow chaos.

Meng Hao remained completely calm in response to the unleashing of the finger attack. He extended his right hand and waved his sleeve, causing Essence of Divine Flame to erupt out, combined with Hexing magic as well as the power of his fleshly body. The Heaven-shaking, Earth-shattering power that resulted was a blow struck by an entire world. A huge boom echoed out, and Meng Hao staggered backward several paces. Even as he looked up, Jin Yunshan's eyes flickered with killing intent, and he closed in for another attack.

"The peak of 9-Essences... is pretty impressive." Meng Hao's eyes gleamed with the desire to fight. He burst into motion, and in the blink of an eye, was fighting all out with Jin Yunshan.

Massive booms rang out. Meng Hao was like a monster. Sometimes he was completely domineering, and pressed the attack viciously. But in his multifariousness, he would then dance away like a wisp of smoke. A moment later, a brutal aura would rise up, like some monstrous beast.

Jin Yunshan attacked with the power of the peak of 9-Essences. Although he didn't use any majestic divine abilities, his cultivation base and fleshly body, in fact, everything about him, was in the great circle of his level; all of it merged together, allowing him to deliver attacks that could shake Heaven and Earth.

In the blink of an eye, the two of them had exchanged so many volleys that it was impossible to keep track of how many. Blood was oozing out of Meng Hao's mouth as he fell back. As for Jin Yunshan, his face was a bit ashen as he glared at Meng Hao, the killing intent in his eyes growing more intense. Apparently, he wasn't too surprised at Meng Hao's level of battle prowess. To him, it was only natural that Meng Hao would be beyond the ordinary 9-Essences level, considering that he had already killed the Sixth and Eighth Paragons.

"You overestimate yourself!" he said with a cold snort. Killing intent flickered as he waved his right hand. In response, boundless golden light shone as numerous razor-sharp golden thorns shot out.

Upon closer examination, they weren't thorns, but were actual beams of

golden light. In the blink of an eye, Jin Yunshan summoned a golden sun around him, which grew larger and more majestic by the moment. Everything began to shake violently; it was as if this sun had supplanted the sun of this entire world!!

“Dao of a Golden Sun; Magic of an Exalted Celestial!” Jin Yunshan spread his arms wide, causing massive amounts of the energy of Heaven and Earth, as well as the aura of the Vast Expanse, to surge toward him. His energy rocketed up, and grave expressions could be seen on the faces of the group from the Vast Expanse as they once again backed away, unwilling to get caught up in the power on display.

Even as they backed up, Jin Yunshan’s hands flashed in a double-handed incantation gesture, and he shoved them out violently. Rumbling sounds echoed out as the golden sun began to twist and distort, transforming into... a seemingly endless cloud of golden flying swords!

It seemed impossible to count the number of swords, and everyone present felt their scalps tingling in shock at the sight. The 9-Essences Paragons reacted a bit less dramatically, but the 8-Essences Paragons gasped.

From the look of it, there were hundreds of millions of them!

Hundreds of millions of golden flying swords shot out, swirling through the air to form the image of what looked like a sun.

Chapter 1435: Heaven Ripping!

A cold smile could be seen on Jin Yunshan's face as he spread his arms wide, sending the hundreds of millions of flying swords up into the air. Then, he lowered his hands and pointed his finger at Meng Hao.

The flying swords began to vibrate loudly, the sound of which merged together into a shocking sound wave that sent everything shaking as the swords... shot directly toward Meng Hao.

It almost looked as if the entire sky was nothing but flying swords. Unending swords and sword light poured down onto Meng Hao as if to slice him to bits!!

A sense of crisis loomed within Meng Hao, but that was no surprise. In fact, it caused the desire for battle to grow more intense within his eyes. He wanted to fight, to fight someone extremely powerful, to fight many powerful people! That was how he would transform himself.

Almost in the same moment that the hundreds of millions of flying swords bore down on him, azure light sprang up around Meng Hao, which then turned black. He vanished, and when he reappeared, he was an enormous black roc!

The roc rapidly grew larger. 300 meters. 3,000 meters. 30,000 meters. In the blink of an eye, Meng Hao was a huge black roc over 30,000 meters long. Then, a piercing cry could be heard as all of the feathers shot off of his body and swirled out into the air. Although there weren't hundreds of millions of them, there were at least a million!

A million feathers spun in the air, becoming a tempest that spread out to meet the hundreds of millions of flying swords.

When they clashed, the resulting boom cracked the sky and shattered the land. The roc feathers were like rowboats on a stormy sea, battered relentlessly by the flying swords.

However, even as the tempest of feathers was whittled away, Meng Hao let out a powerful roar, sending some of his life force aura into the

feathers.

“Mourning-Death, Divine Augmentation!” This was a divine ability he had gained from Shui Dongliu when absorbing his good fortune. 1

It was not the type of divine ability that would unleash a deadly attack. Instead, it allowed him to split his divine sense into a million portions, each of which entered one of the feathers.

In the blink of an eye, each one of the million feathers trembled and then suddenly expanded. Roc heads sprouted out, and then... they transformed into huge rocs!!

Each and every feather transformed, filling the sky with a million huge rocs. The previous tempest increased in size by a thousand-fold, completely blotting out the sky!

The hundreds of millions of flying swords rumbled as they slammed into the rocs. The Heavens shook as the swords and the rocs began to fight a majestic battle!

It was difficult to put into words how shocking this display of divine abilities was!

The flying swords had the advantage of numbers by far, but the incredible power of the rocs ensured that it took hundreds of flying swords to take down just one!

Massive rumbling booms filled the sky, as though a war were being fought. Even as the destruction was carried out, Meng Hao suddenly appeared, blood oozing out of various wounds, but a vicious expression covering his face. He suddenly lifted his hand up, and a painting appeared!

It was none other than the painting he had created when he sealed the Sixth Paragon. Without the slightest hesitation, Meng Hao ripped that painting in half!

What appeared as a result was not the Sixth Paragon, but rather, his life force, his cultivation base, his Essences, and his soul. Everything that was the Sixth Paragon flew out and was absorbed by the numerous rocs, unexpectedly... massive booms rang out, and the world quaked. The group

from the Vast Expanse School all gasped; this was the loudest noise which had echoed out since the fighting had begun. The rocs collapsed, and the hundreds of millions of flying swords all shattered!

At the same time, a massive shockwave blasted out, sweeping across all creation.

The shockwave shoved Meng Hao backward, coughing up blood, his face pale. However, his eyes were brighter than ever as he stared at Jin Yunshan, who had an unsightly expression on his face as blood seeped out of the corners of his mouth!

Jin Yunshan was completely and utterly shaken. Although he had known all along that Meng Hao's battle prowess was incredible, he had never imagined that he would be this strong, or that he would be able to put up such a good fight.

After all, Jin Yunshan was not just in the peak of the 9-Essences level, he was at the great circle, which meant that his cultivation base and battle prowess were such that he could crush all other 9-Essences cultivators!

Not only was he shaken, everyone from the Vast Expanse School was flabbergasted.

"Is this going to be the induction of a new sage...? There are only four peak 9-Essences experts on Planet Vast Expanse, and yet the Ninth Paragon is actually fighting back against Jin Yunshan!"

"Even I wouldn't have been able to stand up to that Exalted Celestial Magic, the hundreds of millions of swords...." Even as everyone was reeling in astonishment, Jin Yunshan threw his head back and laughed.

The laughter was icy and vicious, and filled with intense killing intent, which became a sinister, murderous aura.

"Throughout all these years, you are the first person who is not in the peak of the 9-Essences level to force me to use my second divine ability. Meng Hao... you can die with a smile on your face." Golden light began to shine from Jin Yunshan's eyes. He threw his hands into the air, causing a terrifying, indescribable power to radiate out of him.

The crushing power contained a horrifying aura, and if you looked closely, you would see that he was sending all of his cultivation base power into his hands!

His hand were gradually turning golden, as if they weren't the hands of a cultivator, but were actually made from pure gold!

“This divine ability is something I picked up years ago from the Immortal God Continent. It's called... Heaven Ripping!” With that, he extended his hands toward Meng Hao and made a ripping gesture! 2

Rumbling echoed out, and the Heavens shook. Meng Hao's pupils constricted. As Jin Yunshan's hand pulled apart, Meng Hao felt as if he were suddenly locked in place, fused with the air.

And then, intense pain exploded out within him. Rumbling filled the air as a huge rift were tearing open, starting from above Meng Hao and stretching down. Apparently, a power capable of ripping open the starry sky was now trying to rip open Meng Hao!

*

1. As a brief reminder, half of Shui Dongliu was a Mourning-Death soul, a type of being that comes from Beseech the Devil.
2. Heaven Ripping is an ability Wang Lin used in Renegade Immortal. There was even an entire chapter with the exact same title as this chapter.

Chapter 1436: Fourth Fist Strike: Devil-Butchering!

At this critical moment in the fight, Meng Hao suddenly unleashed a fist strike!

It was none other than the Life-Extermination Fist!

One fist strike could not shake the air which held him tight, so Meng Hao unleashed the second fist strike, the Bedevilment Fist, and then the third, the God-Slaying Fist. Three punches were unleashed in quick succession, making one unified attack. As the power exploded out, he broke free from being locked in place and took a step forward.

In almost that exact moment, the air around him was ripped apart.

At the same time, an explosive power shot toward Meng Hao from behind. It was still... the power of Heaven Ripping!

Apparently that power wouldn't stop until Meng Hao was ripped to pieces!

Meng Hao evaded, but the Heaven Ripping power continued to close in on him. The air collapsed and shattered, and it almost seemed like Meng Hao would be incapable of escaping.

Down below, Shangguan Hong and everyone else gasped, sober expressions on their faces. It wasn't that they had never seen peak 9-Essences experts in action before. However, every time they did, they couldn't help but realize how weak they themselves were.

Seeing that Meng Hao had escaped once again, Jin Yunshan called out in a voice that brimmed with murderous intentions, "Still not dead?!?!"

His hands emanated boundless golden light as he once again made a ripping gesture.

Rumbling sounds surrounded Meng Hao, and a sensation of deadly crisis filled him. However, he felt no fear. In fact, that sensation of danger provoked something from within the legacy of Shui Dongliu.

“The Three God-Slaying Fists aren’t enough. I need... a fourth fist strike, and maybe even a fifth!!” Countless thoughts buzzed in Meng Hao’s mind, and at the same time, the flickering glow of augury could be seen in his eyes.

“The first fist is Life-Extermination. The second fist is Self-Immolation. The third fist is God-Slaying. Well then, the fourth fist... should be Devil-Butchering!

“Devils are like the dark night. The Devil-Butchering Fist is like a dispelling of the darkness!” Meng Hao’s breath came in ragged pants as he thought back to the divine ability the Sixth Paragon had unleashed. That combined with previous enlightenment from past years, as well as a magical technique from within Shui Dongliu’s legacy. Gradually, the outline of an idea formed in his mind.

There was no time for lengthy contemplation. As the Heaven Ripping power built up around him, Meng Hao’s right hand clenched tightly into a fist!

“Fourth fist strike, Devil-Butchering!” Meng Hao roared as he punched out. As the fourth fist strike was unleashed, his fist sent out black ripples which filled the area. Unexpectedly, it turned the entire area around him as black as night!

Then, within that pitch blackness, his fist began to shine with light!

It wasn’t white light, but rather, red. It was as if nighttime had skin, and it was being ripped off to reveal the flesh and blood beneath. This was the fourth fist strike that Meng Hao had just now gained enlightenment of, the Devil-Butchering Fist!

It was not using dawn’s light to dispel the darkness of night, rather it was skinning nighttime alive! This was true butchery!

Booming sounds rang out as the light spread outward. Everywhere it passed, the darkness of night was flayed in shocking fashion. It collapsed, and even Jin Yunshan’s Heaven Ripping magic was completely destroyed. Meng Hao’s fourth fist strike bore down on Jin Yunshan, and the golden light which had fed his power was also flayed!

Booms rang out as Jin Yunshan let out a miserable shriek. His hands were trembling, and blood oozed out of the corners of his mouth as he subconsciously backed up. When he looked up at Meng Hao, his eyes shone with disbelief.

“What divine ability is that!?!?” Astonishment gripped his heart. His Heaven Ripping ability was one of his trump cards, something that people normally could never break. In fact, this was the first time anything like this had ever happened!!

In the past, some people had powered their way through it, but this was someone breaking it on a fundamental level.

Even as Jin Yunshan fell back, Meng Hao emerged from the pitch black area, looking more than ever like he wanted to fight. His eyes glowed with red light as he strode forward, sending booms ringing out into the air.

“You’ve had your chance with your divine abilities. Now it’s my turn.” With that, he pointed his finger directly at Jin Yunshan, unleashing the Hexing magic of the League of Demon Sealers. It was none other than the Eighth Hex!

Instantly, space was locked down tight, causing Jin Yunshan’s face to fall, and a sensation of imminent crisis to well up inside of him.

Jin Yunshan didn’t hesitate for a moment. His eyes glowed brightly as he bit his tongue and spit out a mouthful of blood. As the blood flew through the air, it transformed into a blood-colored sealing mark, which flew up and landed on his forehead.

Rumbling could be heard as an aura appeared which could shake Heaven and Earth. As it exploded out from Jin Yunshan, it became countless bolts of lightning, each and every one of which were the color of gold!

These were golden lightning bolts from a Gold Tribulation!

At the same time, fluctuations began to emanate out from the ancient-looking blood-colored symbol. They were fluctuations which seemed to contain the passage of countless years of time, as though this symbol had

existed before time even began. The fluctuations were so powerful that even the Vast Expanse outside of the necropolis began to tremble. At the same time, clouds began to descend.

Outside of the necropolis, clouds were building up; roiling, seething clouds that were simultaneously shrinking downward toward the necropolis.

In the blink of an eye, those clouds burst through whatever invisible barriers kept the necropolis hidden. Then, they appeared behind Jin Yunshan, where they began to converge into even more golden lightning bolts.

“My ninth Essence is Vast Expanse Tribulation Lightning! I spent years gaining enlightenment of Tribulation Lightning, and even consumed the mist of the Vast Expanse to complete it. If I Transcend into the Daosource Realm, I can become the incarnation of the Vast Expanse’s Tribulation Lightning. Then, all beings within the Vast Expanse will fear my Tribulation Lightning!” Jin Yunshan threw his arms out wide as more and more Tribulation Lightning built up around him. At the same time, the aura of his ninth Essence roiled about!

Meng Hao’s pupils constricted. He could sense how powerful this ninth Essence was, and could even tell that the lightning bolts had some vague will of their own!

He wasn’t sure why, but an image popped up in his mind, something he had seen on the frescoes in the tunnel. He thought of... Allheaven destroying a world with his finger!

At this moment, Meng Hao realized that the aura of the lightning, although not completely identical to the aura of Allheaven’s finger, was very similar!!

“Tribulation Lightning strikes! Nine Essences fatality!!” Jin Yunshan threw his head back and roared, throwing both hands up to point at Meng Hao. Instantly, the lightning formed from the Vast Expanse, his ninth Essence, roared forth. Countless lightning bolts converged, transforming into an enormous golden finger that could shake Heaven and Earth. Mists

swirled around it as it shot toward Meng Hao.

Everything shook, and the sky went dark!

Chapter 1437: Sealing the World-Slaughtering Finger!

Lightning was a relatively simplistic Essence. Many Dao Realm experts would gain enlightenment of it as their first Essence. One of the reasons for this was that it was relatively easy to understand. Because of that, Essence of lightning was not uncommon in the starry sky of the Vast Expanse. Even in the Mountain and Sea Realm, or other worlds, Dao Realm experts with the Essence of lightning were nothing rare.

However, people who transformed the Essence of lightning the way Jin Yunshan had done for his ninth Essence... were as rare as phoenix feathers or qilin horns.

From this, it could be seen how grand Jin Yunshan's aspirations were!

As he said, his ninth Essence was not merely the ordinary Essence of lightning. No, his was Tribulation Lightning of the Vast Expanse. If he did manage to Transcend into the Daosource Realm, and become a Dao, then if his suppositions were correct, he could represent the Vast Expanse as the lord of Tribulation Lightning!

At that time, his level of power would be unimaginable. Although it was currently just speculation on his part, he was confident that he could do exactly that!

At that moment in the fight, he could sense how strangely powerful Meng Hao's Demon Sealing Hexing magics were. Therefore, Jin Yunshan didn't hesitate for even a moment to call upon his ninth Essence!

Endless Tribulation Lightning merged together into the shape of a huge finger that seemed capable of destroying everything. Some of the Vast Expanse could even be sensed upon the finger itself, as if anything who opposed this finger also opposed the Vast Expanse!

Rumbling could be heard as the finger smashed down toward Meng Hao. From a distance, it looked as if it were destroying the starry sky and shredding the Heavens. Even as the vicious lightning bore down on Meng

Hao, his hands flashed in a double-handed incantation gesture, unleashing Hexing magic.

“Seventh Hex!!” The Seventh Hex exploded out, combining with the power of the Eighth Hex which had just been utilized to lock down onto the finger. Gradually, two threads could be seen, wrapping around the finger!

Based on the current level of his cultivation base, Meng Hao could now combine the eight hexes, which was his most powerful divine ability. Everything shook violently, and the entire land mass beneath them quaked as the finger rumbled inexorably toward Meng Hao, radiating power that could destroy worlds.

Meng Hao was shaking, and blood sprayed out of various wounds, as if some invisible pressure were crushing down onto him. He flickered into motion, and every step back caused the ground beneath his feet to crack and shatter.

“DIE!!” roared Jin Yunshan; the pressure increased, and the lightning finger continued to descend toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao’s eyes were crimson. He couldn’t stop thinking about the vision from the fresco, but there was no time to contemplate the matter in detail. It was a critical juncture, and all he could do was perform a double-handed incantation gesture to unleash another Hexing magic.

“Sixth Hex!

“Fifth Hex!!”

The finger was now 30,000 meters away from him. As of this moment, the Sixth and Fifth Hexes landed on it with a boom. The two Hexing magics created two more threads which swept out to connect to the Seventh and Eighth Hexes, further binding the finger!

The finger drew ever closer to Meng Hao, whose eyes widened as world-level destructive power exploded out. It was as if the Vast Expanse didn’t even exist any more, and the only thing in the world was this enormous Tribulation Lightning finger!!

Blood sprayed out of Meng Hao's mouth. He was completely locked down, the ground beneath his feet was being destroyed, and yet he didn't flinch. His hands flashed in a double-handed incantation gesture as he launched more Hexing magics. The Fourth Hex appeared, and then the Third, creating two more threads which wrapped around the huge finger. As of this moment, six threads were wrapped around it, criss-crossing over each other to form something that looked like a net!

A boom echoed out as Meng Hao was shoved down again. A huge crater opened up beneath him as the finger neared to a distance of only 6,000 meters!

The finger was so large it could supercede the starry sky, and yet it was targeting Meng Hao and Meng Hao alone. It didn't affect anyone else present at all.

Rumbling could be heard as the finger then closed in to a distance of 3,000 meters. It was at that point that the Second Hex appeared, adding another thread to the net entangling the finger, making the net look ever more dense.

The bones in Meng Hao's body were beginning to emit cracking sounds, but he continued to stare at the finger with ice-cold eyes that radiated killing intent. His Demonic qi was normally kept hidden inside of him, but now it exploded out, and his pupils turned bright red. Furthermore... an aura erupted out of him that was like an Immortal, but not. Similar to a Devil's but also dissimilar. Comparable to a God, but different.

It was Demonic qi!

As the Demonic qi spread out, the will of the Vast Expanse which existed on the finger suddenly seemed to seethe, and at the same time, the first land mass that they were on shuddered and began to transform.

Meng Hao could sense the transformation, but didn't have the time to study it. His expression was vicious as he looked up at the finger and then began to laugh, a laughter which contained madness, murder, and impetuosity.

There was something in Meng Hao's aura that caused Jin Yunshan's

heart to start pounding for some unknown reason. He wasn't the only one. Everyone who was watching the fight suddenly felt particularly uneasy.

It was in this moment that, all of a sudden, the Sect Leader opened his eyes and shouted, "Jin Yunshan, enough!"

"Nobody can stop me from killing this man!" Jin Yunshan roared in response. "Daoist Vast Expanse, I refuse to believe that you haven't sensed the killing intent directed at him from the necropolis itself!"

"Killing him is conforming to the will of Patriarch Vast Expanse!!" He performed another incantation gesture, unleashing more power. Disregarding the fact that he was overdrawing his own power, he pushed the finger past the 3,000 meter mark until it was only 150 meters away from Meng Hao.

Blood poured down Meng Hao's body from the wounds which had been inflicted. He trembled as he stood there, red with madness. By this point, the finger seemed on the verge of touching him.

"First Hex!" he growled, waving his finger. At long last, the First Hex transformed into a thread which landed on the finger.

As of this moment, eight Hexing magics had transformed into threads, which in turn made an enormous net!

This was the moment Meng Hao had been waiting for. He spread his arms wide, and his eyes gleamed with the desire to do battle. From the moment the battle had begun until now, he had not shown an ounce of fear. His desire to kill Jin Yunshan had not been reduced by one iota.

"Eight Hexes, combine!" His hands flashed in a double-handed incantation gesture, and then he waved them out. Instantly, the eight intercrossed threads that formed the net suddenly began to shrink. As they did, they cut everything in their path. It didn't matter who stood in their way, Tribulation Lightning, Vast Expanse mist, flesh and blood, souls. Everything would be cut!

Rumbling could be heard as the eight Hexes exploded into action. Meng Hao's Demonic qi also erupted out, pouring into the Hexing magics,

transforming the eight threads into objects sharp enough to cut anything in existence. In the briefest of moments... they sliced through the finger, which was only thirty meters away from Meng Hao's head. The finger... was instantly chopped into pieces! The lightning transformed into endless sparks which scattered about in all directions!

"Impossible!!" Blood oozed out of the corners of Jin Yunshan's mouth, and his expression was one of disbelief and astonishment.

"You don't qualify to kill me!" Meng Hao said, flicking his sleeve. As the lightning dissipated, all the fetters holding him back vanished. Instantly, he flew forward in shocking fashion.

Chapter 1438: Void Divinity Conversion!

As of this moment, it wasn't just Jin Yunshan who was in a state of shock. The Sect Leader, who was still there on the altar, was astonished at the sight of Meng Hao's eight Hexes combined.

He was well aware of how terrifying Jin Yunshan's ninth Essence was. In fact, if he were in Meng Hao's place, he would have been forced to rely on his own ninth Essence to negate it.

And yet Meng Hao unexpectedly... didn't even use a ninth Essence at all. Instead, he had used what appeared to be eight restrictive spells. The shocked Sect Leader couldn't help but wonder what other secrets Meng Hao must be harboring.

"Those eight restrictive spells must be his first eight Essences. And yet, he only needed those eight Essences to deal with Jin Yunshan's ninth Essence.... This Meng Hao is inhuman!!" The Sect Leader took a deep breath. Never could he possibly have imagined what the truth was. It wasn't that Meng Hao didn't want to use a ninth Essence: he hadn't even gained enlightenment of a ninth Essence.

Jin Yunshan was just as shocked at Meng Hao's eight Hexes as the Sect Leader. Despite not having unleashed a ninth Essence, he left them completely and utterly flabbergasted.

"He's still hiding his true strength!!" The other cultivators of the Vast Expanse School couldn't help but gasp. The fight which was playing out in front of their eyes left them even more intensely aware of how powerful Meng Hao was. In fact, he was so terrifying that... he could probably alter the face of Planet Vast Expanse, giving it not four supreme powers, but five.

"I refuse to believe that you can fight me and not have to use your ninth Essence!" Jin Yunshan's face was twisted in an unsightly expression. By now, he held no scorn whatsoever for Meng Hao's battle prowess. Although Meng Hao was a bit weaker than him overall, the difference between them was negligible!

He knew that if Meng Hao had unleashed a ninth Essence, he would already be in a very difficult situation. However, even being put in a tight spot like that was preferable to what was happening now, which was that he had already gone all out with everything he had, and yet Meng Hao was still able to hold back some of his power.

The thought of that caused Jin Yunshan's murderous aura to grow even more intense. He flickered into motion, transforming into a beam of golden light that shot toward Meng Hao, who also shot forward. In the blink of an eye, the two of them slammed into each other with a boom and started fighting.

Meng Hao transformed into a huge roc that flickered with black and azure light. Jin Yunshan waved his hand, causing a sun to spread out, which shot countless golden beams of light out in attack.

In the space of a few breaths, the two of them exchanged hundreds of volleys. Meng Hao performed an incantation gesture and pointed out, causing numerous mountains to crush down onto Jin Yunshan.

Jin Yunshan let out a cold harrumph and waved his hand. The sun detonated, sending out destructive power that shredded the mountains to pieces. In response, Meng Hao performed an incantation gesture, sending boundless Essence of Divine Flame out in a powerful attack, destroying the air between the two of them.

The battle was so intense that the entire world was affected, even the starry sky. Meng Hao and Jin Yunshan fought back and forth in midair, and the explosions caused everything to shake and distort.

A closer look would reveal that Meng Hao was bleeding out of his mouth, and yet, Jin Yunshan's face was pale white. He was a bit stronger than Meng Hao, but not strong enough to overwhelm and kill him.

"Dammit!!" A boom echoed out, and Jin Yunshan shot backward, glaring at Meng Hao. Then, he started laughing, a cold laughter filled with incisive killing intent. "Meng Hao, I demand to see exactly what your ninth Essence is!"

Eyes glowing brightly, he performed a double-handed incantation

gesture and then pushed both of his hands down.

“Next, I will unveil the most powerful magic I have. It even exceeds the Dao of my ninth Essence! Let’s see if you can handle it, Meng Hao!” He raised his right hand and pointed his finger up into the sky.

In the moment that he raised his finger up, a stream of Essence shot out, transforming into a beam of light. It shot up and... merged into the sky!

Next, he pointed down, and a second Essence shot out from him and merged into the ground.

As the two Essences merged with the sky and the land, Jin Yunshan himself seemed as if he were doing the same thing. Although he still hovered there in midair, visible to the naked eye, if one scanned the area with divine sense, they would not be able to detect his existence.

Meng Hao stopped in place, his eyes widening. The sense of crisis raging through him now far exceeded that when Jin Yunshan had unleashed his ninth Essence.

Back on the altar, the Sect Leader’s pupils constricted. “The Void Divinity!”

Next to him, Sha Jiudong looked on silently, eyes glowing from deep within.

The other cultivators from the Vast Expanse School were all visibly shocked. “It really is the Void Divinity.... That’s Jin Yunshan’s most powerful trump card. He hasn’t used it for ten thousand years.”

It was at this point that Jin Yunshan waved his sleeve, sending a third Essence out, not into Heaven or Earth, but into the wind!

The wind in the world became a part of Jin Yunshan, and as it swept about, it became a tempest that connected the sky to the land.

“Void Divinity!” cried Shangguan Hong. “It’s Jin Yunshan’s Dao of the Void Divinity!” Everyone else suddenly began to recall Jin Yunshan’s legendary trump card, and their expressions flickered as they backed up even further.

According to the stories which were told about the Void Divinity, it was a magical technique that was powerful to a terrifying degree.

The sensation of deadly crisis in Meng Hao's heart was only growing more intense by the moment. His intuition was telling him that if he didn't interrupt the magic in this very instant, then its power would continue to grow explosively.

His two eyes glittered as his third eye opened. In that instant, his view of the world changed.

When he saw what was surrounding Jin Yunshan, his expression turned grim. He could see Jin Yunshan's body dispersing, merging into Heaven and Earth, becoming a part of the world. Meng Hao could tell that if he got close to him, he himself would also be sucked in by the power of Heaven and Earth, and be dispersed.

Even as Meng Hao studied Jin Yunshan with his third eye, Jin Yunshan's expression twisted viciously, and he let out a powerful roar. Suddenly, his fourth Essence expanded out, merging into one of the five elements that existed within this world. Fire!

Instantly, the temperature around him began to increase, as the fire elements in the world began to be taken over by Jin Yunshan.

Things weren't over yet. His fifth Essence began to merge with another of the five elements, metal. A killing will filled the entire world, and at the same time, a sixth Essence spread out. All of the withered and dried up wood and vegetation within the world suddenly quivered, and then began to fill with life. Each and every plant and bit of grass was becoming a part of Jin Yunshan.

Even more outrageous was that his seventh Essence merged into all of the water in the world. Rivers raged, and the blood within the veins of everyone present began to tremble.

Seven Essences. Metal, wood, water, fire, earth. And then there was the wind. It was as if everything in the entire world belonged to Jin Yunshan. Next was his eighth Essence. As he waved his hands, it exploded it and merged into... the light!

Light was boundless, everywhere and all present. As of this moment, it seemed as if Jin Yunshan didn't even exist. Then, his ninth Essence of lightning began to spread out, and his fleshly body began to turn transparent.

Nine Essences, all merged into the world around him. As of this moment, Jin Yunshan, his body, his cultivation base, his blood, his soul, everything about him had become part of the world around him. He was one with sky and the land!

He was the sky. He was the land. He was the wind. He was the five elements. He was lightning. He was... the world!

RUUMMMMBLLLLLE!

"Meng Hao!" Jin Yunshan howled. Although the words came out of his mouth, they seemed to resonate everywhere. All locations, all rivers, every part of the world was filled with his desire to kill. Flame creatures, plants, mountains, lightning; it exploded out from everything!

It was almost like the roar, not just of Jin Yunshan, but of the entire world.

Meng Hao inhaled sharply, and as for everyone else present, they were shaking.

"Meng Hao, this is my... Void Divinity Conversion!" Jin Yunshan lifted his right foot up and then stamped it down. As he did, Heaven shook and Earth trembled. The world shook, and a shocking force exploded out. Jin Yunshan was the lord of the entire world, its spirit. The world was his body, and with a thought, he could set everything into motion!

The stamp of his foot was like the world stamping its foot, causing everything to shake violently.

The world shuddered, and the lands quaked. Jin Yunshan's right hand clenched into a fist, and then he punched out!

From Meng Hao's perspective, that punch was like all of the power in the entire world converging into one spot. It contained lightning, the five elements, the sky, the land, everything! And it was all striking toward

Meng Hao.

As the fist slammed into him, Heaven and Earth shattered. Blood sprayed out of Meng Hao's mouth, and he flew backward.

"Still not ready to unleash... your ninth Essence?!" Jin Yunshan's killing intent had reached the pinnacle. He took another step forward, and the world shook as he slapped his right hand toward Meng Hao!

The world trembled as all of the power it contained formed together. A tempest sprung up, blasting against Meng Hao before he could even stabilize himself. Blood sprayed out of his mouth, and he fell back, cracking sounds emanating out of his body, his flesh mangled and torn.

"You still don't qualify to see my ninth Essence!" he growled. As he looked up, his eyes glittered, and his third eye shone brightly. Intense light spilled out, like a torch on a moonless night. That light transformed into... a calling!

Chapter 1439: The Call of the Emperor

The call came, not from Meng Hao himself, but from the bronze lamp inside of him. At the same time, he opened his third eye, causing brilliant light to shine out, filling the world!

Something else happened that was extremely telling. As the light and the call spread out, Heaven and Earth began to shake, and Jin Yunshan could do nothing to stop it!

Jin Yunshan's face instantly fell!

Meng Hao hovered in midair like a divine spirit, majestic light shining out from this third eye. Using that third eye to look at the world around him, he saw so many ghosts that they seemed infinite in number. Back when they were alive, they had lived in a thriving world that ended when it was destroyed by Allheaven's finger.

As such, it could be said that the true masters of the necropolis were these ghosts!

When Meng Hao opened his third eye, sending out divine will in the form of brilliant light, it coupled with the call from the bronze lamp to spread out silently through the entire land mass. In that moment, all of the ghosts which had previously prostrated themselves in worship to Meng Hao suddenly shivered and looked up, confused expressions in their eyes.

"Who is it... that calls to us...?"

"That's the aura of the Emperor. The fluctuations of the Emperor...."

"The Emperor... is calling to us!"

Their voices could not be heard by the living, nor could the ghosts themselves even be seen. However, the living beings present could sense the fluctuations emanating out because of the ghosts.

Only the ghosts themselves could hear their voices, which grew louder and louder until they were like a gigantic sound wave.

Even the ghosts which were not on the land mass were shivering, and gleams of excitement could be seen in their eyes!

Their howls filled every nook and cranny of the enormous continent, along with an icy aura. The ghosts took to flight, sending out coldness that could freeze anything and everything. They were beginning to go mad because of the call they felt from their Emperor.

“The Emperor.... That’s the aura of the Emperor. He’s calling to us!!”

The seemingly infinite numbers of ghosts outside of the land mass caused cracking sounds to ring out as ice spread out to cover the ruins in the area. Innumerable hordes of ghosts surged forth like a shocking wave to sweep across the bridge that connected to the first land mass.

Countless howling voices rose up. “Anything which blocks our path to pay greetings to the Emperor shall be destroyed!!”

A terrifying, piercing cry rang out from the mists that surrounded the bridge. Before the mists could disperse, the icy coldness and hosts of ghosts crushed them.

Rumbling sounds echoed out as the bridge trembled. The arms of blood and gore that made up the bridge were frozen, and within the space of a few breaths of time, the bridge itself was nothing more than ice as the ghosts outside rushed onto the land mass.

Even as that happened, more and more ghosts began to appear within the ruins on the surface of the land mass itself. At first, they looked confused, but when they felt the call coming from Meng Hao, their hearts stirred with excitement. Soon, all of the ghosts within all of the ruins and districts looked up and began to cry out.

“It’s the Emperor!!”

“The aura of the Emperor.... The Emperor isn’t dead after all, he’s come back!!”

“The Emperor... is calling to us!!”

RUUUUUUMMMMBLLLLLE!

All of the ghosts both on the land mass and outside of it were surging toward the central region, where Meng Hao was.

Within the ruins of a certain temple, a shocking aura suddenly appeared, along with a vague, blurry figure. He looked different than the other ghosts, more ancient. As he looked off into the distance, a powerful energy surged off of him.

“The Emperor... is back!” he murmured. He made a grasping gesture with his right hand, causing a Soul Pike to appear in his hand. Then, he transformed into a blast of cold air that shot off into the distance.

In another area was a river, which began to churn as a vicious face rose up from within it. When its eyes opened, they looked around blankly for a moment before filling with excitement.

“The Emperor.... It’s the Emperor...” Trembling, he flew out of the water. This ghost was fully 30,000 meters long, causing everything to shake as he flew at top speed in the direction of Meng Hao’s calling.

In a location even further off was a towering mountain, atop which stood a man in a flowing white robe. He was a ghost, and yet he still possessed his own will and mind. Shivering, he turned his head and looked off into the distance with an expression of disbelief. Then he started laughing in mad excitement.

“He’s not the Emperor, but he represents the Emperor....” He flew into motion, icy coldness spreading out from him as he headed off into the distance.

Scenes like this played out in numerous locations all over the first continent. As the ghosts took to flight, rumbling sounds filled Heaven and Earth, and the entire world shook!

Within the first land mass of the necropolis, icy coldness spread out. In fact, if one could look down from a high vantage point, it would look like the entire land mass was turning into ice!

The ruins iced over. The mountains froze. The rivers turned solid. Countless plants and even the wind itself began to freeze up.

As the world trembled, the people standing outside of the altar felt icy coldness, and astonishment rising up within them.

“What’s happening!?”

“Something’s wrong. Things got freezing almost instantly!”

In their shock, they looked around and saw snow swirling about in the air. However, this snow wasn’t white, it was black! Of course, what Meng Hao was seeing wasn’t snow, but rather, countless ghosts!

Before, he had never truly called upon the ghosts within the necropolis, not of his own accord. He hovered there in midair, arms spread wide as boundless iciness spread out. Cracking sounds filled the air as countless ghosts swirled around him.

None of the living beings could see the ghosts, but they could sense what was happening. They could detect the countless shocking auras building up around Meng Hao, and could tell that there were invisible figures surrounding him.

However... Jin Yunshan was different. Because of the Void Divinity state he was in, he was fused with the world itself. He was the world, and the world was him. Therefore, he could see all of the countless ghosts flying around him and Meng Hao.

Then, he watched in shock as the ghosts began to prostrate toward Meng Hao, eyes burning with passion and excitement.

“Greetings, Emperor!!”

“Greetings, Emperor!!”

“Greetings, Emperor!!”

Countless voices rose up in a cacophony that shook the starry sky, a massive sound wave that boomed like thunder.

“Impossible!!” Jin Yunshan was astonished to the ultimate degree, and was shaking violently. What was happening was completely and utterly shocking.

He almost couldn’t even believe what he was seeing.

More and more ghosts appeared, filling the area for tens of thousands of kilometers in all directions, all of them prostrating with zealous fanaticism!

There were even some entities which were shocking to Jin Yunshan on an individual level, which likewise prostrated to Meng Hao. Jin Yunshan was so shaken that his forehead began to drip with sweat.

Meng Hao was being worshipped by an innumerable group of ghosts, as if he were their Emperor. His eyes were cold as he looked around, and the cultivators who met his gaze were completely shaken mentally. It was as if they were being struck by lightning, or frozen into ice.

Shaking in astonishment, the Sect Leader rose to his feet, and off to the side, Sha Jiudong gasped in shock.

They were both in the peak of 9-Essences, and although they were not in the midst of the Void Divinity Conversion and could not see the ghosts, their divine sense could clearly detect the countless ghosts which Meng Hao had called from both within and without the land mass.

The entire area was completely and utterly filled with ghostly spirits!

And then there was the freezing temperature, which caused both of them to inhale sharply. If they had such a reaction, it was hardly necessary to detail how Shangguan Hong and the other 9-Essences cultivators reacted, or the 8-Essences Paragons. All of them felt their minds spinning in astonishment!

The battle between Meng Hao and Jin Yunshan had reached a complete and utter peak.

Jin Yunshan's scalp tingled with numbness; he simply couldn't find a way to believe that even his Void Divinity Conversion had not forced Meng Hao to use his ninth Essence, but instead... prompted him to summon an army of infinite ghosts!

"Who are you?!?!" he shrieked. As his voice echoed out, Meng Hao extended his right hand. He could clearly sense that as of this moment, although he wasn't truly the Emperor of this land, he was the commander

of these legions of ghosts.

The world didn't belong to him, but that didn't matter. He could simply conquer it!

He lowered his hand, and the swish of his sleeve sent his will out to the countless ghosts. The ghosts then looked up at Jin Yunshan, screamed, and charged toward him.

Jin Yunshan's mind trembled, and the sensation of deadly crisis which filled him grew even more intense. He had no time to think of what to do. He could only grit his teeth and unleash all of the power of the Void Divinity Conversion, sending the power of the world to fight back against the ghosts!

However, there was one thing he hadn't considered. Although he had already used the Void Divinity Conversion to become the world itself, that world, both before the great catastrophe which had struck it, and after... had always belonged to this group!

In the past, they had been cultivators, but now they were vengeful ghosts!

Chapter 1440: The Five Potentates!

The shocking scene which was playing out in front of the cultivators of the Vast Expanse School was something that they would never be able to forget for the rest of their lives. It signified that a fifth Potentate had appeared on Planet Vast Expanse!

Before this moment, the planet had four peak 9-Essences cultivators, like four Potentates who no one could possibly shake. Each one of them were at the pinnacle of existence.

That group of four consisted of Sha Jiudong, Jin Yunshan, the Sect Leader, and Immortal Bai Wuchen. They were the most powerful experts on Planet Vast Expanse, and were all on the cusp of reaching Transcendence.

All other 9-Essences cultivators had no choice but to bow their heads in deference to them.

But after this battle between Meng Hao and Jin Yunshan, in which Meng Hao transformed into a black roc, in which he unleashed the combined eight Hexes, everyone was completely shaken.

Most shocking was what was playing out right at this moment.

The world itself attacked, and countless ghosts screamed. Up to now, Jin Yunshan had mostly maintained the upper hand, but at the moment, blood was spurting out of his wounds as he was battered by an unending stream of ghosts. He was tottering on the verge of collapse, and the Essences which he had dispersed into the world were now experiencing an intense force of expulsion!

The wind was expelling them, the five elements were expelling them, and it was the same with the land, the sky, and the lightning. The entire world burst with a force of expulsion.

Rumbling could be heard as blood sprayed out of Jin Yunshan's mouth. He tumbled backward, countless ghosts battering at him in complete madness. The air around him twisted and distorted, and Jin Yunshan's

face was completely ashen as he cried out miserably. There was literally nothing he could do to change what was happening.

The sensation of deadly crisis within him had reached a fever pitch. There was nothing he could do to fight back, and in fact, he couldn't even struggle. He might have become the world, but these ghosts were the collective master of that world!

And the Emperor of those ghosts was Meng Hao. Meng Hao's will represented the will of all the ghosts.

Massive booms rang out.

As the surroundings were physically shaken, Jin Yunshan was mentally shaken. The Essence he had inserted into the wind was being ejected, and before he could do anything to solidify it, a boom echoed out in his mind, and blood sprayed out of his mouth as that Essence was gone.

In the blink of an eye, his control over the world was no longer harmonious, and the wind did not belong to him.

"Who are you?" Jin Yunshan cried, looking at Meng Hao with complete disbelief. "Just who exactly are you?!?!"

As he fell back, the ghosts continued to attack him with complete insanity.

It wasn't that he hadn't been aware of what happened in the void outside the land mass, when the masses of ghosts rushed forth to offer worship to Meng Hao. The main difference was that the sheer numbers involved couldn't be compared to each other any more than the light of a firefly could compare to that of the full moon.

He simply couldn't fathom how Meng Hao was possibly capable of such a thing. Even more terrifying was that the number of ghosts only continued to increase, which caused Jin Yunshan's scalp to tingle in fear.

It was then that the land began to quake, and Jin Yunshan felt the Essence he had inserted into it being shaken in violent fashion.

Then, the fusion between himself and the land was violently ripped

apart. Jin Yunshan felt as if his mind were being torn, and he yet again coughed up a mouthful of blood.

Unfortunately for him, there was absolutely nothing he could do to stop any of the things that were happening. He could only look on as his third Essence, which he had sent into the plants, was forcibly ejected.

Then, his murderous fourth Essence, which had merged into the world's fire, experienced the same thing. After that was the water in the world.

After those Essences were rejected, the tearing sensation that he felt grew more intense, until he felt completely disharmonious with the entire world!

The ghosts were screaming as they swirled around. Among the army were some especially terrifying figures who swept the ghosts forth in attack, giving Jin Yunshan no choice but to continue to fall back.

Then, his eighth Essence, which he had merged into the sky, was slashed at as if by an invisible blade, cleaving it away. Then was his ninth Essence, which was in the lightning. Jin Yunshan coughed up a massive mouthful of blood, and his body sagged listlessly. He was no longer mostly transparent, but instead, had been completely rejected by the world.

He almost looked as if he had been crushed by a gigantic foot.

His most powerful trump card, the Void Divinity Conversion, was crushed like a wet twig by the simple wave of a hand by Meng Hao. He didn't even have the power to fight back.

"If you weren't in this place, you couldn't do any of this!!" Jin Yunshan shrieked. After having been rejected by the world, Jin Yunshan fell back again, and yet the ghosts didn't stop attacking him.

Meng Hao's eyes flickered with the desire to kill, and he extended his right hand and then pointed toward Jin Yunshan. That caused the ghosts to go mad with even more killing intent than before, and rumble toward Jin Yunshan in attack.

"NO!!" he screamed. An extraordinary sensation of deadly crisis raged within him. His hands flashed in a double-handed incantation gesture,

causing countless shield layers to spring up around him. The shields shattered one by one, and he was shoved backward, an unyielding and yet despairing look on his pale face.

Actually, he had spoken correctly just now. Meng Hao would have had a very difficult time dealing with his magical technique were he not in this specific location. Furthermore, he would have been forced to pay a steep price to do so, not simply wave his hand casually as he had just done.

Rumbling echoed out as the shields surrounding Jin Yunshan collapsed. It was at this point that the Sect Leader suddenly flew into motion to appear next to Jin Yunshan. He waved his sleeve, unleashing his peak 9-Essences cultivation base power to protect him against the murderous ghosts.

At the same time, Sha Jiudong leaped forward, appearing on the other side of Jin Yunshan. His expression was somber as he similarly waved his hand, unleashing cultivation base power that caused a massive sandstorm to rise up to defend Jin Yunshan.

But even the combined power of all three of these powerful experts was not enough to rattle the endless army of ghosts. They began to fall back under the battering of the ghosts, their qi and blood boiling, their cultivation bases trembling.

“What are the rest of you doing?” barked the Sect Leader, his voice urgent. “Are you just waiting to see Fellow Daoist Jin get killed!?! Old Ninth, stay your hand!!”

Shanguan Hong didn't say anything, but bitterness filled his heart. He and the others present gritted their teeth and flew out to appear around Jin Yunshan. They poured their own power into the defense effort, unleashing their cultivation bases, creating an intense tempest of force to block the ghosts.

That combined force managed to halt the ghosts momentarily. However, these ghosts represented the life force of the entire land mass, and also contained some entities which were extremely powerful. As they continued to attack the tempest of power, it began to flicker like a flame

on the verge of being snuffed out.

Meng Hao hovered there in the air, a bit unsettled at how things were proceeding as he watched everything that was happening. The ghosts of the necropolis were inherently powerful, which Meng Hao assumed had something to do with the cause of their deaths.

“Old Ninth, we need Fellow Daoist Jin!” the Sect Leader said, looking up at Meng Hao. “His magical techniques and divine abilities will help us in the land masses beyond this one. If he perishes here, it will be far, far more difficult to reach the ninth land mass.”

Jin Yunshan maintained his silence. His face was ashen as he looked at Meng Hao, mixed emotions clearly visible. Although he didn’t want to back down, he knew that if he didn’t, it was highly likely that he would perish.

Finally, he sighed. He was a decisive person, and although he could tell that Meng Hao seemed unwilling to rest until he was dead, he ignored that, clasped his hands, and bowed to Meng Hao. He spoke no words, simply relying on his actions to explain his attitude.

Meng Hao frowned. While it was true that he wanted Jin Yunshan dead, and to do that would be a difficult thing once they left the necropolis, the truth was if he actually killed him right here and now, it would earn the ire of everyone else from the Vast Expanse School. That was not an outcome he would willingly choose.

Even as he considered the matter, the Sect Leader gritted his teeth and once again spoke out.

“Old Ninth, I can understand that you have some misgivings. Therefore, I hereby swear a Daoist oath that if Jin Yunshan provokes you again, I will stand by your side to crush him!”

“As do I,” Sha Jiudong said. As of this moment, he had no choice other than to adjust his appraisal of Meng Hao. This battle had proved that he truly qualified to stand on equal footing with the other four Potentates.

Jin Yunshan smiled bitterly and nodded his head.

Seeing all that, Meng Hao still wanted to kill him, but after considering the matter, he quashed the idea.

“Since that’s the case, we’ll let the matter drop,” Meng Hao said coolly. “However, I can’t let things go as simply as that. I almost got killed just now. Fellow Daoist Jin, I demand penance.”

Jin Yunshan sighed inwardly. He knew that Meng Hao had the upper hand now, and that there was nothing he could do to fight back against him. Gritting his teeth, he made a grasping motion, causing a bracelet to appear out of thin air.

“Take this, Fellow Daoist Meng. This should make up for what happened here.” He waved his hand, sending the bracelet flying out of the tempest to hover in front of Meng Hao. Meng Hao scanned it with divine sense, and found that it contained a holding pocket filled with countless Immortal jades, as well as numerous other precious materials. After looking it over, he nodded and put it away.

With that, he waved his sleeve, causing the ghosts to retreat, bowing to him the entire time.

Meng Hao hovered there like the Emperor of the entire world. The group from the Vast Expanse School would never forget what had just occurred.

This battle had propelled Meng Hao from being the Ninth Paragon into being one of five Potentates of Planet Vast Expanse.

His position was now just as high as the Sect Leader’s. In fact, his battle with Jin Yunshan ensured that none of the powerful experts of the Vast Expanse School would ever dare to offend him, at least not within the necropolis.

Meng Hao was powerful outside the necropolis, but once inside, he had shown that he was... the monarch!

The army of ghosts made him invincible to anyone who had not Transcended.

Chapter 1441: Transcendence Dais!

After a quiet moment, Meng Hao put the bracelet away, and slowly, his killing intent faded. Everyone breathed sighs of relief. Jin Yunshan's expression was very unsightly, but contained no hatred. He silently made his way a bit off into the distance, where he sat down cross-legged to meditate.

Sha Jiudong and the Sect Leader shared a hesitant look, then headed over to Jin Yunshan's side, where they also sat down. It appeared as if they were there to offer protection, but even Jin Yunshan knew that they were also there to keep him in check if necessary.

They would protect him if Meng Hao's killing intent suddenly ignited again, but they would likewise make sure that Jin Yunshan didn't do anything to the detriment of Meng Hao.

The fight just now proved that Meng Hao had the right to be one of the Potentates, and neither Sha Jiudong nor the Sect Leader had any desire for anymore negative repercussions. The best thing was that the matter be dropped.

The ghosts didn't disperse. After Meng Hao closed his third eye, they remained floating in the area, seemingly ready to spring into action the moment Meng Hao called them again.

"Fellow Daoist Ninth Paragon," said the Sect Leader, "this matter stemmed from Fellow Daoist Jin's hot-headedness. That's true of both the incident on the bridge, and what happened here.

"However, he wasn't completely in the wrong. There's been a bit of a misunderstanding here. Even I was able to sense that there is a certain lingering will within the world of the necropolis. I personally do not think that it is the will of Patriarch Vast Expanse, but Fellow Daoist Jin was convinced that it was.

"Fellow Daoist Ninth, I think it's safe to assume that you sense it too. It's a killing intent that is directed at you....

“That is one of the reasons why Fellow Daoist Jin attacked you. He was under the belief that the will of Patriarch Vast Expanse wanted you dead. He believed that by killing you, he could please the Patriarch, and perhaps be benefited in the seeking of enlightenment.” It was in this manner that the Sect Leader explained why exactly Jin Yunshan had attacked Meng Hao.

Meng Hao’s expression flickered upon hearing the explanation. After a moment of thought, he sent some divine sense into the land. Then, he nodded thoughtfully, although he declined to comment.

The Sect Leader didn’t seem to want to discuss the matter further. Changing topics, he pointed at the altar.

“Fellow Daoist Ninth Paragon,” he said with a smile, “this altar is the location of Transcendence here in the necropolis. There are nine lands here, each one of which has an altar just like this one.

“Supposedly, the altars are connected to Patriarch Vast Expanse, and were actually created by him countless years in the past. As for the specific details of the matter, even after combing through the ancient records, I wasn’t able to find many clues.

“However, Transcendence is definitely possible here. Before you arrived just now, Fellow Daoists Jin, Sha and myself managed to acquire a bit of enlightenment. However, we’re still quite a ways away from a breakthrough.” As he spoke, he approached Meng Hao, seeming very much at ease. It was a sharp contrast from only a few moments before.

Although he had treated Meng Hao well in the past, he now viewed him as more of an equal, and his tone of voice was far more sincere than before.

“Time is very limited right now. Fellow Daoist Ninth paragon, why don’t you try to gain some enlightenment from the altar? It’s impossible to say how lucky you will get, but you should try. As for the other Fellow Daoists, if you don’t mind, I hope... that you can allow them to step onto the altar as well, to try to reach enlightenment. After all... we don’t have much time.” With that, the Sect Leader clasped hands and bowed. Meng Hao

thought for a moment, then nodded.

“That will be fine,” he said with a slight smile. Waving his sleeve, he flew over to the altar. He immediately noticed how that there were certain strange properties to the altar, something he hadn’t taken note of before. Without any hesitation, he sat down cross-legged in the very middle.

Even as he did, the other cultivators from the Vast Expanse School took deep breaths and followed. They looked beyond excited at their chance. Before, they had only been able to wait outside of the altar as they stood as Dharma Protectors for the three Potentates. At that time, they hadn’t been permitted to even get close, but now, they had their chance to step onto it. Although Meng Hao was there on the altar, none of them had offended him, so as long as they acted respectfully, they would not incite any of his killing intent.

One by one they flew over. After clasping hands and bowing to Meng Hao, they all chose locations to sit down cross-legged and meditate. In addition to Shangguan Hong and the other 9-Essences Paragons, there were the subordinates, the 8-Essences Paragons. All of them came, even Meng Hao’s two 8-Essences subordinates.

His two subordinates had a bit of a different standing now. As the subordinates of the Ninth Paragon, they felt the least pressure of anyone. They sat down cross-legged on either side of Meng Hao, to stand as Dharma Protectors as he sought enlightenment.

The Sect Leader’s expression was very solemn as he sat down cross-legged between Jin Yunshan and the altar. Although it seemed like a random position, both Meng Hao and Jin Yunshan could read between the lines.

He was demanding stability, and no fighting!

Jin Yunshan sighed inwardly. Actually, he had long since quelled any notions of trying to fight Meng Hao. The ghosts still existed, and he knew that if he made a move, he would most likely be killed in body and spirit.

“I wonder how many days this Meng Hao will be able to continue to seek enlightenment on the altar,” he thought. “This place is not as simple as it

appears on the surface. The longer you sustain the effort of seeking enlightenment, the more you will gain. However, everyone has their limit. He might hold the higher ground in terms of fighting, but the altar requires personal enlightenment and good fortune. It has a lot to do with cultivation base level as well. I bet Meng Hao... will last no more than five days!" He snorted coldly. He himself had lasted for seven days on the altar before reaching his limit. Even if Meng Hao hadn't appeared when he did, he would still have awoken from his seeking of enlightenment.

The Sect Leader and Sha Jiudong had lasted for similar lengths of time, seven days. At the moment, Jin Yunshan wasn't the only one who was pondering how long Meng Hao might last. Sha Jiudong was thinking about the same thing.

Even the Sect Leader was contemplating the matter. Although his expression was placid, his eyes gleamed with thought as he looked over at Meng Hao.

The altar was completely silent as dozens of people sat down cross-legged and closed their eyes to seek enlightenment.

As soon as Meng Hao's eyes closed, rumbling sounds filled his mind as he was connected to the altar.

He instantly sensed his thought processes speeding up, whereas his qi and blood began to slow. Even his cultivation base became extremely calm. However, his divine sense and his mental faculties all began to spin at ten times their normal speed.

Apparently, meditating on this altar focused one's power in a way that made it easier to grope for understanding regarding Transcendence.

It was as if he were gazing at the starry sky, at the heavenly bodies, at the transformations of the world, at the flow of time, at the beginning and end of all living things. He was looking at everything.

It was his first time experiencing visions such as these, but it was not his first time experiencing such a mental journey. Actually, this experience was very much like what he had gone through when looking at the frescoes in the tunnel!

The Hexing magics inside of him, which were in the midst of turning into Essences, experienced a sudden acceleration in the process. After a long moment passed, Meng Hao reignited his thought processes in. Inwardly, he was shaken.

“This altar serves to bless the power of one’s enlightenment. It can be used to propel one from eight Essences to nine, and can also aid in moving from 9-Essences into Transcendence.... At the moment, the most important thing for me is not Transcendence, but rather, the creation of my Ninth Hex, and subsequently, my ninth Essence!

“I will use this altar to... gain enlightenment of my Ninth Hex!” Rumbling filled his mind as he focused his thoughts, cast aside any distractions, and focused completely on seeking enlightenment of the Ninth Hex!

This was not his first time contemplating that particular Hex. Quite the contrary, he had long since begun to make preparations for it!

“My Ninth Hex... will be... molded upon the Seal the Heavens Incantation. It will form... the Seal the Heavens Hex!” Meng Hao felt as if thunder were crashing inside of his mind. As his thoughts focused, the aura of Transcendence rose up within him. Gradually, a wind sprang up, which began to swirl around him.

His mind was completely occupied with seeking enlightenment regarding the Seal the Heavens Hex. He would take the Seal the Heavens Incantation and elevate it from being a magical technique or divine ability, into being a Hexing magic. Once that was branded into his soul, it would become... the Ninth Demon Sealing Hex!

Normally speaking, if he wanted to successfully accomplish such a task, it would take a very long time. However, with this altar, he could increase that speed exponentially.

Time passed. After the first day went by, different fluctuations were emanating off of different cultivators. The 8-Essences Paragons were radiating auras of the 9-Essences level, and the 9-Essences Paragons were emanating a feeling of Transcendence.

Various expressions were flashing across their faces. Some people seemed enraptured, some confused, some regretful, some grim.

On the second day, some of the 8-Essences Paragons began to tremble and sweat profusely. Pained expressions could be seen on their faces, but they held on bitterly.

On the third day, all of the 8-Essences Paragons were clearly on the verge of giving up. Only the 9-Essences Paragons were still completely focused on enlightenment.

On the evening of the third day, one of the 8-Essences Paragons opened his eyes, and blood oozed out of his mouth as he flew off the altar. He looked back at everyone else on the altar, his expression conflicted as he sighed inwardly. However, after a moment, his eyes gleamed. Having endured for three days, his gains were significant.

Soon more 8-Essences Paragons opened their eyes and then flew off of the altar, blood oozing out of their mouths. After enduring until they couldn't do so anymore, they had no choice but to remove themselves from the area of the altar.

By midnight on that third day, all of the 8-Essences Paragons had awoken from their trances and left the altar.

Left behind were only seven people: Meng Hao, and the other 9-Essences Paragons of the Vast Expanse School.

Jin Yunshan's face was calm, but inwardly he was laughing coldly. "He'll hold out for two more days at the most. As for everyone else, they'll awaken tomorrow."

Chapter 1442: He Won't Last Five Days!

Jin Yunshan was definitely not the only person paying close attention to what was happening on the altar. The Sect Leader and Sha Jiudong were similarly focused.

The surrounding 8-Essences Paragons were also paying close attention, with occasional looks of envy flickering across their faces, as well as anticipation.

“The Ninth Paragon is definitely going to hold on for the longest. I just wonder how many days that will be...”

Time proceeded to flow onward. By the time the fourth day arrived, three of the group of seven were trembling, clearly on the verge of opening their eyes. Whether or not they were willing, the aura of awakening grew more and more intense upon them.

“The Seventh, Fifth, and Fourth Paragons have cultivation bases slightly weaker than the others. I’m afraid they won’t last for longer than four days.” Whispered conversations were taking place among the surrounding audience.

Meng Hao’s expression was calm, but in his mind, the enlightenment regarding the Seal the Heavens Hex had placed him into a very perilous situation. Thanks to the increased power of enlightenment, he now fully comprehended the Seal the Heavens Incantation. If anyone were able to see inside of him, they would see a shocking sealing mark gradually forming.

Surrounding that sealing mark were eight other magical symbols that looked very similar to it. Those were the other Demon Sealing Hexes. From the look of it, the Ninth Hex was now about seventy percent complete.

There were threads that snaked out from that ninth sealing mark, which spread out to fill Meng Hao’s body. As they did, they made contact with... strands of Immortal qi within him that had been severed during the process of being defiled and becoming the Demon.

Every thread that spread out from the sealing mark completed one of those threads of Immortal qi. The more Immortal qi that filled him, the stronger the sensation of Transcendence grew.

Apparently, the appearance of the Ninth Hex could help Meng Hao to proceed along the path of Immortality which had previously vanished!

The mark of the Ninth Hex gradually caused more and more Immortal qi to converge, causing him to radiate the air of an Immortal!

Time passed by, hour by hour. Soon, half of the fourth day was gone, and the three trembling 9-Essences Paragons slowly opened their eyes. After exchanging mutual glances, they sighed and removed themselves from the altar.

They had made various gains, but were the first among the 9-Essences Paragons to have to leave the altar. Although that lost them a bit of face, there was nothing they could do about it. Outside of the altar, they sat down cross-legged and continued to observe the other four who had remained behind.

Of those four, three were trembling, with Meng Hao being the only person who looked the same as before.

As the fourth day ended, and the fifth day approached, another of the 9-Essences Paragons opened his eyes. At first, a blank look could be seen, but soon he sighed and left the altar.

In almost that exact moment... the fifth day arrived.

As of this moment there were only three people left on the altar, including Meng Hao!

Among the nine Paragons, the Second and Third Paragons were second in power only to the Sect Leader. The fifth day had arrived, and they might be trembling, but having reached this point in their search for enlightenment, their auras of Transcendence were strong.

"The fifth day has arrived!! There are only three left. I wonder which one will last the longest!"

“The Sect Leader lasted for seven days, as did Fellow Daoists Jin and Sha. Seven days is the limit.”

“I’d be willing to bet that the Second and Third Paragons both awaken today. As for the Ninth Paragon... he might last for six days. In fact, seven days isn’t necessarily an impossibility!” Even as everyone discussed the matter, Meng Hao suddenly trembled visibly.

Although the movement was slight, everyone was paying close attention, and instantly noticed.

“What? Could it be that the Ninth Paragon is going to awaken now?!?! B-but... it’s only been five days!”

“His fight with Fellow Daoist Jin proved that he qualifies to be one of the Potentates. How could he awaken after only five days?” Everyone seemed shocked, but Jin Yunshan’s lips were turned up in a cold smile. He was certain of his judgement in the matter. After reviewing his battle with Meng Hao over the course of the past few days, he was more convinced than ever that there was something very strange about Meng Hao’s cultivation base.

That strange aspect was that he didn’t seem to truly have nine Essences. If he did, Jin Yunshan was confident that he would have been able to force him to use it.

“Perhaps he simply used some special technique to unleash the battle prowess of the 9-Essences level,” he thought, “but in reality, his cultivation base is only at the 8-Essences level! If that’s true, then he doesn’t qualify to be one of the Potentates!” Jin Yunshan’s eyes flickered, and his cold smile grew wider.

Sha Jiudong and the Sect Leader also had strange expressions on their faces as they studied Meng Hao. They were quite shocked that he was already showing signs of awakening even though it was only the fifth day.

Time passed. Soon, half of the fifth day had gone by. The Third Paragon coughed up a mouthful of blood, and then opened his eyes. After a moment passed, he shook his head, and yet his expression was one of excitement as he rose to his feet and left the altar.

Not long after that, the Second Paragon sagged listlessly. His body was extremely withered, and the aura of awakening upon him was strong, and yet unexpectedly... he calmly continued.

That caused a buzz of conversation among the onlookers, especially when they realized that Meng Hao was trembling even more than the Second Paragon was, and the aura of awakening upon him seemed to surpass the air of Transcendence. Strange looks appeared on their faces.

“What’s going on? The Ninth Paragon can’t even hold on for five days?”

“Could it be... could it be because he sustained internal injuries?”

“There’s another possibility. What if the reason he never used his ninth Essence is because... he doesn’t actually have a ninth Essence?!” Everyone present was a Paragon, adept at analysis and skilled in scheming. It wasn’t long before everyone was contemplating the matter in such a way.

If Meng Hao really did awaken on the fifth day, then his newly-acquired qualification to be one of the Potentates would become a matter of skepticism. Although no one would say anything out loud, once he got back to the sect, he would be faced with many difficulties.

It was at this point that Meng Hao began to tremble even harder than before, and the aura of awakening grew stronger and clearer. Even his mind was battered with waves of shock.

“Why is this happening?!?!” he roared inwardly. “This is impossible!!” His divine sense was completely converged onto the sealing mark of the Ninth Hex. That mark had come to be ninety-nine percent complete on the previous day, and the threads spreading out from it had filled his body. The Ninth Hex was almost complete, and his cultivation base was poised on the brink of rising.

However, even in that moment of keen anticipation, the sealing mark of the Ninth Hex unexpectedly... began to break apart!!

Closer examination confirmed that it was true. The sealing mark really was breaking apart, without any warning or indication as to why. Over the course of a few hours, more than half of it collapsed, causing rumbling

sounds to fill Meng Hao.

That was the reason why he was shaking; at the same time, a powerful force was apparently attempting to wrench him out of his state of enlightenment.

Meng Hao's reserves of power ran deep. He had Shui Dongliu's legacy, and even more importantly, the bronze lamp. As that powerful force attempted to force him out of enlightenment and into awakening, the bronze lamp began to emit a soft glow, which negated that power. However, he continued to tremble, and blood oozed out of the corners of his mouth.

Everyone watched as this happened. Meng Hao shook violently, and in the end, blood began to drip down off of his chin.

It was in that moment that the Second Paragon suddenly coughed up a mouthful of blood and shivered. As the blood oozed down, he sat there for a moment, then struggled to his feet. However, instead of looking as though he had been defeated, he threw his head back and laughed uproariously. As he stepped off of the altar, astonishingly, he emanated... the aura of the peak of 9-Essences!

That aura instantly attracted the shocked attention of everyone in the area.

The Sect Leader, Sha Jiudong, and Jin Yunshan all looked over. The Second Paragon truly had acquired good fortune from the altar. Although he hadn't reached Transcendence, his cultivation base had advanced by half a step, placing him at the peak of the 9-Essences level.

Instantly, expressions of congratulations began to ring out. The Sect Leader smiled and clasped hands meaningfully.

The excited Second Paragon took a deep breath, then suddenly looked back over at Meng Hao, and within his eyes flickered the desire to do battle. If Meng Hao could become one of the five Potentates, then he was confident that he could do the same.

That was especially true considering the fact that despite Meng Hao

being the only person left on the altar, he was shaking visibly. That was the source of the Second Paragon's confidence, and was also why everyone else was paying such close attention to what was happening.

Jin Yunshan suddenly chuckled.

"He won't be able to last longer than five days," he said. "We're only a few hours from being finished here." As his voice echoed out, Sha Jiudong frowned, and a look of doubt appeared in the Sect Leader's eyes.

Everyone looked on silently, unwilling to speak. All eyes were focused on Meng Hao. Time passed.

Meng Hao's mind was in chaos. He glared at the motes of light which were the shattered bits of his Ninth Hex, as they slowly floated out into his body. After some thought, he began to calm his thoughts.

"There were no faults in either my plan or how I carried it out. Transforming the Seal the Heavens Incantation into my Ninth Hex was the right decision.

"Furthermore, during the process of enlightenment, my understanding of the Seal the Heavens Incantation went far past the previous level. I even managed to converge the Hex smoothly. So why did I fail in the end?

"I need to try again, and determine the reason. What caused the conversion of my Ninth Hex to fail!?" Having made his determination, he didn't hesitate to start gathering together motes of light that were the Ninth Hex, simultaneously drawing upon the power of the altar to speed up the enlightenment process.

As the motes of light gathered, the sealing mark of the Ninth Hex gradually began to re-form. This time, Meng Hao went about the process with more caution. Every breath of time that passed, he was completely focused, and made sure to avoid any mistakes. After reaching various levels of enlightenment, he used the resulting knowledge in the creation of the Ninth Hex.

Time passed. Two hours. Four hours.... Rumbling could be heard inside of him, and once again he began to tremble. It was then that... the fifth day

ended!

Chapter 1443: Difficulty Completing the Ninth Hex!

When the fifth day passed, Jin Yunshan did not look happy at all. In fact, it was almost as if he had just been slapped by an invisible hand.

A few hours before, he had boldly asserted that Meng Hao wouldn't last for five days. But here Meng Hao was, still sitting there, and calmly at that, with no more trembling.

The scene left him very grim-faced. As for everyone else present, strange expressions could be seen on their faces.

Regardless, the suspicions people had regarding Meng Hao were now deeply rooted within them; even if he lasted for six days, they would still have their misgivings.

Unless... he could pull off a miracle, something so astonishing that it would drive away any lingering suspicions. If Meng Hao did so, then his status and grandeur would reach an unimaginable level.

"Six days is his limit!" Jin Yunshan growled. His words were met with silence as everyone focused on watching Meng Hao.

Two hours passed. Four hours. Six hours.... Ten hours. Twelve hours. As the fourteenth hour passed, the grimness in Jin Yunshan's face deepened. Everyone else had strange expressions as they watched Meng Hao. What was happening with his ninth Essence left many of them rattled.

Soon, sixteen hours had passed. Then eighteen. Finally... twenty-four hours went by. A collective gasp could be heard.

"Seven days!!"

"Something strange is going on with the Ninth Paragon. He was clearly on the verge of waking up, but then he lasted for an entire additional day!"

"True, but seven days is probably his limit."

As people discussed the matter, Jin Yunshan's face was as pale as ash. He couldn't feel more gloomy. He had openly said five days was Meng

Hao's limit, only to have him last six days. Then he said six days was the limit, and he lasted for seven.

He also noticed people glancing furtively at him, causing rage to explode up in his heart.

"Seven days! That's definitely his limit!" he growled through gritted teeth.

Everyone seemed to agree with him. Although no one said so out loud, the consensus was that Meng Hao would last for seven days.

Even the Sect Leader seemed to hold the same opinion. As for Sha Jiudong, he closed his eyes and stopped watching. Instead, he inwardly pondered whether or not Meng Hao... really had a ninth Essence.

Everyone continued to wait. Ten hours passed. Then sixteen hours. It didn't take long for twenty hours to go by. By this point, Jin Yunshan couldn't remain seated. He rose to his feet, an expression of disbelief painted on his face.

He wasn't the only one. Sha Jiudong opened his eyes again, and the Sect Leader was staring. All three of the peak 9-Essences cultivators looked on with minds reeling.

If they had such a reaction, there was little need to wonder how the others were responding. Looks of astonishment could be seen on all faces.

"The seventh day is about to pass. Don't tell me... he's actually going to last for eight days!?"

"That's impossible! The Sect Leader only lasted for seven days, as did Fellow Daoists Jin and Sha!"

People were still discussing the matter when the twenty-fourth hour passed by, and... the eighth day arrived!

As of this moment, Jin Yunshan, the Sect Leader, Sha Jiudong, and everyone else were completely flabbergasted. Eight days was longer than anyone present had maintained their position on the altar.

If Meng Hao had maintained a calm disposition the entire time, it might

not have been as shocking. But he had almost woken up in the middle of the process, only to continue onward resolutely. Everyone who was watching felt as if their minds were under attack by shock.

Jin Yunshan felt like he had just been slapped in the face again. His eyes went wide as the eighth day began to go by.

Six hours. Twelve hours. Eighteen hours.... Soon another twenty-four hours had passed. Meng Hao had endured for nine days!

“Impossible!!” Jin Yunshan exclaimed. The Sect Leader’s eyes were as wide as saucers, and Jin Yunshan was panting. In the audience, jaws dropped in shock.

Meanwhile, inside of Meng Hao, the sealing mark of the Ninth Hex was once again ninety-nine percent complete. Vast amounts of Immortal qi were streaming out into various parts of his body, connecting them to the sealing mark. As a result, the feeling of an Immortal was growing stronger inside of him!

It was possible to imagine what would happen if he finally succeeded. When the Ninth Hex was completed, it could completely reverse Meng Hao’s path, and change the Demon... back into the Immortal!

Meng Hao was so focused on the matter that he could even detect that as the Hex reached a state of completion, his cultivation base was changing. It was transforming back into what it had been in the Mountain and Sea Realm, what he had cultivated all along... the path of Immortality!

Forming the sealing mark was drawing fully upon Meng Hao’s concentration and powers of enlightenment, and he was sure that he hadn’t made any mistakes.

The aura of a ninth Essence also appeared, merging with the other eight Hexes, which made Meng Hao even more certain in his judgement.

Without any hesitation, he proceeded to make his attempt at completing that final bit. Rumbling could be heard as the sealing mark of the Ninth Hex... unexpectedly collapsed again!!

A tremor ran through Meng Hao, and blood oozed out of the corners of

his mouth. The same power which had exploded out before once again appeared, except with even more intensity than before.

The bronze lamp flickered, and blood sprayed out of Meng Hao's mouth. It took supreme effort, but he managed to force himself to remain in the state of seeking enlightenment. His mind felt as if it were being pounded by thunder, and inwardly, he was raging.

"Something or someone doesn't want me to complete my Ninth Hex!!" During this second attempt at finishing the Ninth Hex, he had been paying very close attention, and was now certain that, in the very moment of completion, certain fluctuations had appeared within him that would be very hard to detect unless you were looking for them.

Those fluctuations had interfered with the appearance of the fully formed Ninth Hex, and led to his second failure.

Although Meng Hao's eyes were closed, they were completely bloodshot. He gritted his teeth, and once again drew upon the power of enlightenment offered by the altar. He fully rotated his cultivation base, and the light of the bronze lamp poured energy out into all parts of his body. It was as if he had become one with the altar itself.

Rumbling sounds could be heard as the enlightenment power of the altar exploded out, filling Meng Hao. The aura of Transcendence grew stronger, like a tempest that raged around the altar.

His repeated attempts resulted from an unwillingness to fail again. However, to everyone else, what was happening was utterly shocking.

The crowd outside the altar watched the aura of Transcendence grow on Meng Hao, and could sense an intense level of pressure radiating out from him.

Everyone began to edge away, even the Sect Leader. The aura of Transcendence, and the powerful tempest, were things that could shake Heaven and Earth.

Wild colors flashed in the air, and to everyone watching, it almost seemed as if Meng Hao were in the process of Transcending.

It was a feeling that left their scalps tingling with shock.

“Impossible!!” Jin Yunshan murmured, his eyes wide.

Shock filled his person as he and everyone else waited another day. The ninth day concluded, and the tenth day began. Then... the eleventh day, and the twelfth.

“T-twelve... twelve days?”

“How inhuman can this Ninth Paragon be? How could anyone last for twelve days?!?!”

“Just what level is his cultivation base? The peak 9-Essences experts only lasted for seven days, but he actually... has lasted for twelve days!? And from the look of it, he’s going to keep going!!” Everyone was abuzz, thoroughly shaken by Meng Hao.

Of course, however shaken they were, that feeling was not going to be reduced. It was only going to grow more intense!

Thirteen days. Fourteen days. Fifteen days....

When the sixteenth day arrived, Meng Hao had surpassed all expectations and pulled off that miracle!!

He had done something that no one else could even come close to doing, something... truly miraculous!!

Whatever suspicions people had harbored regarding Meng Hao were completely and utterly dispelled. Even the Second Paragon, who had recently stepped into the peak of the 9-Essences level, was so shaken that any desire he had to challenge Meng Hao to a fight were completely gone.

Jin Yunshan refused to believe that, after enduring for sixteen days, and having begun to emit such a strong aura of Transcendence, Meng Hao didn’t have a ninth Essence.

“Dammit, he was actually holding back even more than I thought in our fight!! He did it all on purpose! He was using me to establish his place, and he let me go so that he would have an excuse to kill me if I ever made another move on him!!” Having reached this conclusion, Jin Yunshan

began to tremble inwardly. Finally, he forced himself to regain his composure. However, he was filled with bitterness, and couldn't help but muse about how sinister Meng Hao was.

The Sect Leader's face was unprecedentedly serious. He was completely shaken, even more so than when Meng Hao had been fighting Jin Yunshan. In fact, he was thinking exactly the same thing that Jin Yunshan was.

They weren't the only ones. Sha Jiudong had also reached this same conclusion, and his fear of Meng Hao had reached an even higher level than before.

Meng Hao had no way of knowing how frightened everyone was because of his actions. He only knew that his third attempt at forming the Ninth Hex had resulted in yet another failure.

However, this failure was met with complete calm. This time, he had not been focused on actually forming the Ninth Hex, but rather, on determining... who it was who was trying to stop him!

In the moment that the Ninth Hex collapsed, he was sitting there cross-legged on the altar, and a tremor ran through him. His eyes suddenly opened, and they were completely bloodshot as he looked up into the starry sky of the Vast Expanse. His expression was one of fury and madness as he said, "So, it turns out it was you all along!"

Chapter 1444: Swear an Oath!

Sixteen days.

The fact that Meng Hao had remained on the Transcendence Dais for sixteen days left the audience completely and utterly shaken.

Jin Yunshan. Sha Jiudong. The Sect Leader. All of them were completely jarred.

Then Meng Hao opened his eyes, radiating the aura of Transcendence, and everyone felt their hearts trembling. Those blood-colored eyes contained an unspeakable ferocity, giving them the sensation that they were looking some wild beast from ancient times.

Meng Hao had not Transcended, and in fact, his Ninth Hex had collapsed three times in a row. However, when the third collapse occurred and Meng Hao opened his eyes, his consciousness left the Transcendence Dais. At the same time, a powerful air of Transcendence filled the area, becoming a raging vortex that spun wildly around him.

The vortex rose higher and higher until it seemed to connect to the Heavens. It was a completely shocking sight.

As the boundless winds screamed, the Sect Leader's face flickered, and he fell back. Jin Yunshan and Sha Jiudong didn't hesitate to do the same, as did everyone else in the crowd. Even as everyone retreated to a position 30,000 meters away from the altar, they could feel the wild aura raging up from that location.

Rumbling echoed out in all directions as the cyclone of wind shot so high it seemed to slash into the starry sky of the Vast Expanse itself.

In the middle of the cyclone was Meng Hao, who was looking up into the Heavens, eyes wide. It was as if he could see through the Vast Expanse and beyond, as if he were staring at an entity that no one else could see.

"It was you...." he said, his eyes crimson. He had been puzzled by the first collapse of the Ninth Hex. He had been shaken by the second. But the third... had corroborated his suspicions, and provided the answer which he

sought.

He had confirmed that there really was something surreptitiously interfering with his cultivation. It was like some omnipotent force which was preventing the Ninth Hex from appearing.

Perhaps the more accurate description would be to say that it was not impeding the Ninth Hex, but rather, preventing Meng Hao... from transforming from the Demon back into the Immortal.

And the reason for that was...

“Allheaven fears the Immortal,” he murmured in a grim voice. Now he understood everything. If he hadn’t passed through that tunnel, and seen all of the visions regarding Allheaven, if he hadn’t seen Allheaven destroy a world with a single finger, he would never have been able to piece together the true reason why his Ninth Hex was being interfered with.

Because he had, he was now able to determine definitively that the aura of the force preventing the completion of the Ninth Hex... and the aura he had felt when Allheaven destroyed that world in the fresco... were exactly the same.

They were exactly the same type of power.

In fact... because of the three failures of the Ninth Hex, Meng Hao had discovered something terrifying. Unexpectedly, the power of this so-called Allheaven apparently had the same origin... as the Demon.

Instead of saying that Allheaven had interfered, leading to the collapse of the Ninth Hex, it would be more accurate to say that the deed was done by both Allheaven and the Demonic power inside of him.

“Allheaven....” he murmured. He had many questions regarding Allheaven, many misgivings. And no answers. In fact, deep in his heart were many speculations which had arisen because of what he had seen in the fresco visions. Speculations regarding the Mountain and Sea Realm, the Immortal God Continent, the Devil Realm Continent, and Planet Vast Expanse.

Unfortunately, there were no answers to the many questions he had. Nor

were there even any clues or evidence to analyze. There was even a bit of disbelief within Meng Hao's heart. After all, he was no newcomer to the practice of cultivation. He was well aware that many times, the things you saw with your own eyes weren't even real.

But as of now, he was certain about the existence of Allheaven.

Within the starry sky of the Vast Expanse, there was definitely some entity with the name... Allheaven.

Furthermore, there was some connection between this entity called Allheaven, and himself. At the very least... Meng Hao was certain that there had been something pushing him along in the transformation from Immortal into Demon.

Meng Hao's eyes flickered with killing intent as he shot to his feet. In that instant, the sky filled with intense rumbling, and the cyclone began to crumble, as though some incredibly powerful destructive force were descending.

The aura of Transcendence shattered, and the altar began to shake violently. The intense pressure descending made it seem like the power of the entire starry sky of the Vast Expanse was crushing down.

Everyone from the Vast Expanse School coughed up blood, even the Sect Leader, Sha Jiudong, and Jin Yunshan. Shocked expressions could be seen on their faces as they fell back even further than 30,000 meters.

The entire first land mass seemed to be filled with an intense but soundless screaming, causing everything to shake violently.

Meng Hao stood there on the altar facing the intense pressure, and he coughed up a mouthful of blood. The pressure was trying to get him to submit. It pushed down on him, causing his legs to tremble, as if it were trying to get him... to kneel to the Heavens.

But there was more to it than that. From Meng Hao's perspective, it was as if this pressure were trying to get him to swear an oath that he would never again attempt to transform from the Demon into the Immortal.

His face was extremely grim as the pressure increased. He was shaking

visibly, and his bones creaked on the verge of breaking.

But then he suddenly threw his head back and laughed and laughed uproariously. His eyes glowed bright red as his Demonic qi surged.

“Threatening me?” he chuckled. His hands flashed in a double-handed incantation gesture, and at the same time, his third eye opened. Instantly, the surrounding ghosts became completely visible.

Beneath the Heavenly pressure, the countless ghosts were trembling. And yet, expressions of insane viciousness could be seen on their faces, unyielding glares of hatred.

Even Meng Hao could sense that the aura of the pressure weighing down now was exactly the same as when Allheaven had destroyed this world. How could this host of people who had been killed by Allheaven not also detect that very same thing?

“I, Meng Hao, have practiced cultivation free from guilt my entire life. I pursued the Dao of the Mountains and Seas. Even you, Allheaven, do not qualify to levy threats against me!” Mad laughter rang out as Meng Hao waved both of his arms out in front of him.

When the surrounding ghosts sensed Meng Hao’s will and determination, they threw their heads back and let out bitter howls. None of the other cultivators present could see the ghosts, but they could sense the sudden influx of intense coldness they caused.

There were so many ghosts it was impossible to tell how many there were, and they were all howling together in one unified voice which rose up into the Heavens. They didn’t know why they had become ghosts after having been killed by this pressure. Nor did they understand why they were more powerful in death than in life. But they did know that, even though they had been unable to fight against this power when they were alive, now that they were dead... they would most definitely fight it!

It was impossible to say which ghost did it first, but soon, all of them were flying toward the cultivation base tempest which swirled around Meng Hao. In the blink of an eye, countless ghosts were flying through the air toward him, causing the tempest to become bigger and stronger.

Vast, uncountable numbers of ghosts surged forth, causing the tempest to rapidly expand. 300 meters. 3,000 meters. 30,000 meters. 300,000 meters. 3,000,000 meters. 30,000,000 meters....

It spread out seemingly without end, with the altar at its center. Eventually, it covered the entirety of the first land mass, creating an indescribable cyclone.

The enormous cyclone swept across the lands, causing mountains to tremble and rivers to seethe.

The cultivators from the Vast Expanse School were there within the raging winds, trembling, looking around in astonishment at what was happening. They were even able to make out faint screams echoing about.

“Revenge. Revenge!”

“We were killed by Allheaven’s finger, so in death, we shall exterminate Allheaven!”

“The vengeance of the Vast Expanse Continent is like a flame that not even the Heavens can extinguish.” Countless voices rang out, a cacophony like the voices of an entire world, causing a huge sound wave to surge within the windstorm. Then, Meng Hao raised his hands and pointed up toward the Heavens. In response, the windstorm, along with the countless howling ghosts, began to rise up into the air.

They were like a magnificent army charging toward the Heavens, a sight no one would ever be able to forget.

The combined forces of an entire land mass, of all the ghosts that existed there, charged up as if to vanquish the Vast Expanse. Then, as everyone watched, the sky up above was torn apart by the cyclone.

The starry sky beyond was revealed, and the Vast Expanse, and yet the windstorm kept rising up. Suddenly, within the shattered dome of the Heavens, a figure appeared. He was blurry, and impossible to distinguish clearly. Formed from mist, he stood there, looking at the endless army of ghosts, then stretched out a hand in a pushing motion.

Something like an invisible barrier apparently existed in front of that

figure, and deafening rumbling sounds echoed out as it began to move downward.

When the ghosts ran into the invisible barrier, they collapsed into pieces, completely incapable of doing anything against it.

The vast disparity of power was like a huge ravine which there was no hope of crossing.

“Transcendence!” said the astonished Sect Leader. “That’s... the power of Transcendence.” Everyone else was equally astonished.

Meng Hao might have emitted some of the aura of Transcendence, but that had been somewhat of a fluke. This figure, and the outstretching of its hand... caused... the true power of Transcendence to appear.

Meng Hao stood there on the altar, watching everything play out. Inwardly, he was shaken. He could also sense the power of Transcendence, and could tell that the windstorm he had created, and the countless ghosts within it, could do nothing to stop or even shake this invisible barrier.

In the blink of an eye, the barrier destroyed half of the cyclone, and continued to grind downward relentlessly. It was now getting closer and closer to Meng Hao.

To explain by means of illustration, the power of Transcendence compared to the power of a cultivator who had not Transcended, was like... a drop of water compared to fog.

No matter how much fog there was, it could do nothing to prevent that drop of water from passing through it.

In this case, the windstorm and the ghosts were the fog, and that invisible barrier was the drop of water. Not only did it pass through the fog, it crushed everything, and could not be resisted in the slightest.

Chapter 1445: One Word!!

The blurry figure behind the invisible barrier apparently had long hair and was wearing a long robe. However, no facial features were visible except for his eyes.

Those eyes were cold and merciless, as if there were no life in them at all, as if they were empty, as if this figure were nothing more than... a weapon!

A weapon!

That was the distinct feeling Meng Hao got after catching sight of the figure behind the invisible barrier.

At the same time, the barrier continued to crush down. The cyclone continued to collapse, and the countless ghosts continued to dissipate. The lands shook, and crevices opened up. Mountains and rivers rumbled, and everything, even the altar, began to crumble and show signs of complete collapse!

The group from the Vast Expanse School had long since reached a state of utter astonishment. All of them rotated their cultivation bases in an attempt to resist what was happening, but it did little good.

In that moment of extreme crisis, the bronze lamp inside of Meng Hao blazed brightly, as though it were building up power which would explode out at any moment.

However, before that could happen, all of a sudden... faint fluctuations began to emanate out from the distant ninth land mass, where that huge figure was seated on the enormous throne.

They were faint, but even as they appeared, Meng Hao could hear a voice coming from the ninth land mass. It was difficult to hear at first, but it only took a moment for the volume to swell. Eventually, it was possible to make out a word. Apparently it was saying...

BE!

It was only one word, apparently the word “be,” and it almost sounded

like a musical note.

That one word came out from the ninth land mass, and as it passed along, it caused the eighth land mass to shake, and the light there to grow dim. Even as the eighth land mass was thrown into turmoil, the sound passed into the seventh land mass, then swept across the sixth. The sky trembled, and roaring sounds filled the lands. Everything shook in astonishing fashion. And the sound was getting closer and closer to Meng Hao....

By the time it reached the fifth land mass, the sound had apparently changed. What Meng Hao now heard sounded more like the word “gone!”

GONE!

In fact, now it almost didn’t sound like two words had been spoken. Whistling screams accompanied the arrival of the sounds, and everything trembled. It passed through the fifth land mass, roared across the fourth, then shook the third and the second....

By the time it reached the first land mass, the explosive sounds had united. The word was not “be”, nor was it “gone.” It was one single word.

“BEGONE!”

“BEGONE!!”

“BEGONE!!!”

The sound echoed about endlessly. It was like an explosion that violently shook the Heavens!

Apparently, it had always been one word, but had been spoken at such a distance away, and traveled so quickly, that it had become split apart along the way. But now that it was here in the first land mass, it erupted with incredible power. That was a power which could destroy the Heavens and extinguish the Earth!

Incredible rumbling echoed out across the first land mass. Mountains and rivers were rocked, and a wind of madness swept about. Wild colors flashed about in Heaven and Earth!

It was a single word that was so domineering it caused everything to shake wildly!

One word crushed the Heavenly might. One word shocked all creation. One word caused the invisible barrier to begin to tremble, and then to be riddled with cracks. A moment later, it shattered completely!

That same word shook the Heavens, causing the blurry figure up above to distort and twist, as though it were being battered by a massive tempest. Then, it faded away.

This virtually indescribably shocking scene occurred because of only a single word!

A single word uttered by that figure on the enormous throne, one word, completely changed everything. The crushing might of Allheaven was dispersed, and the Heavens were shattered!

It was as if that word had become an enormous hand which swept across Heaven and Earth, crushing everything that was not of the necropolis. Even the will of Allheaven was incapable of staying, and had been driven out.

This sight left Meng Hao completely reeling. He turned to look over at the ninth land mass, mind rumbling with shock.

However, that voice... was something only he could hear. The Sect Leader and the others couldn't detect it at all. Of course, they were still shaken, although not by the voice itself; they mistakenly believed that everything that was happening was being caused by Meng Hao.

Meng Hao looked at the ninth land mass, and was suddenly struck with the deep desire to go there and see for himself this figure was who had just uttered that word. Who was he?

The indistinct figure had clearly emanated the power of Transcendence, and whose single uttered word seemed filled with virtually infinite power.... A person like that... must be a Transcendent cultivator!!

"Was it Patriarch Vast Expanse...?" Meng Hao thought, taking a deep breath. That was the only guess he had at the moment.

After a long moment passed, Meng Hao swished his sleeve and reigned in his cultivation base power.

The sky was quiet, and the lands went still. A moment ago, a shocking tempest had been raging, but now everything was back to normal, almost as if nothing had happened at all.

Meng Hao closed his eyes, and his heart was anything but calm. Far too many shocking events had occurred, and he deeply desired to know who it was that had uttered the word “begone” just now. He wanted to know why Allheaven feared the Immortal, and he wanted to know what the arrival of the Demon meant. What did the Demon have to do with Allheaven, and why... did they have similar origins!?

Even more than all that, he wanted to know why the Mountain and Sea Realm had been fated to be destroyed. Behind the scenes, there was some entity manipulating things, and that entity was none other than... Allheaven.

In any case, the name of Allheaven was now deeply burned into Meng Hao’s mind. To him, it was a clue.

He stood there silently for a moment before opening his eyes. When he did, he saw the cultivators of the Vast Expanse School panting. Because of everything that had occurred, there was no way they could possibly maintain their calm. First was the sixteen days he had spent seeking enlightenment, then there was the aura of Transcendence shaking the Heavens. Then came the Heavenly might which had crushed down onto them. All of that left them in complete and utter fear of Meng Hao.

It took a moment for Meng Hao to compose himself, but when he did, he turned once again to gaze at the ninth land mass. Then, his third eye slowly closed. When his view returned to normal, he stepped off of the altar.

In that moment, the cultivators of the Vast Expanse School looked at him with mixed emotions.

After a moment of silence, the Sect Leader cleared his throat, and was just about to say something when, all of a sudden, the entire land mass

lurched. Ripples spread out in the Heavens, and majestic light began to shine down.

That light contained boundless, indescribable heat which immediately caused the freezing coldness on the first land mass to begin to fade away.

However, that was of secondary importance. Most noticeable to Meng Hao, and to all of the cultivators from the Vast Expanse School, was that grass had sprouted from the ground beneath their feet. In the blink of an eye, everything around them was as green as jade!

Off in the distance, the ruins suddenly blurred as time seemed to flow backward, and they began to return to their original state!

A city gradually appeared, and there were some areas off in the distance where mountains and rivers could be seen....

It wasn't just in their immediate vicinity; the entire first land mass was experiencing a dramatic transformation.

This bizarre turn of events caused the Sect Leader's face to fall.

"Time is up! We cannot stay here any longer. If we do... we will all die! Meng Hao, even if you can command the ghosts here, you will still perish!!

"Go. All of you, go now!!" The Sect Leader transformed into a beam of light that streaked at top speed off into the distance.

The other Paragons seemed to be aware of what was happening. Faces flickering, all of them took to flight, including Jin Yunshan and Sha Jiudong.

Seeing such a reaction from them caused Meng Hao's eyes to flicker. At the same time, he could sense that the flame in the bronze lamp was dying down, and his strange connection to the ghosts was vanishing.

Without the slightest hesitation, he flew into the air, joining the group as they sped toward the bridge leading off of the land mass.

As they sped along, the Sect Leader explained matters to Meng Hao. "When the necropolis is opened, there is a time limit in place. If you can't reach the first land mass within ten days, then something bizarre will

happen in the region outside. Once, we almost exceeded that time period and... the ruins outside of the land mass returned to their ancient state. There were even living people. But then something strange happened. They all died....

“At that time, some of our people died there too....

“The time limit once you reach the first land mass is one month. If you don’t get to the second land mass by that time, then you must leave the necropolis!

“Considering the bizarre things that happen outside of the land mass when the time limit is reached, I can only imagine what happens within the land masses.

“To say that this necropolis is one of the most dangerous places in the entire Vast Expanse is no exaggeration. It’s a restricted area even for people in the 9-Essences level.

“Right now, we have no choice but to leave. We can return in one year at the soonest, and then... hopefully we can reach the second land mass. If we can, then we should be able to stay inside a bit longer.”

Even as Meng Hao listened to the Sect Leader’s explanation, he could feel his connection to the ghosts fading away. Soon, it was gone altogether, and the bronze lamp had gone almost completely dark.

His face flickered as he turned to look behind him.

When that happened, his mind spun. He saw that all of the ruins had reverted to their previous state of glory. He saw cities that existed like mirages on the surface of the land. He saw statues suddenly appear, and he saw mountains rise up which had not been there before.

Chapter 1446: The Aura of the Copper Mirror!

Most astonishing of all was that he could see... countless people!!

Shockingly, there were numerous cultivators, including men and women, old people and young. Apparently, this was just an ordinary day to these people, as they went about the affairs of their daily lives.

The sound of tolling bells could be heard, and the buzz of conversation. People gave sermons on the Dao in the mountaintop sects.

There... were no mortals in this place. The entire land mass was occupied by cultivators; everyone here practiced cultivation, no matter their position.

There was something warm and genial about these people. There was nothing vicious or evil about them, and everyone seemed to be smiling and laughing. Although there might be some level of fighting and scheming, some grudges or conflicts, the overall sensation was that this place was a sublime, flourishing civilization.

There was Immortal qi, strong and abundant, and Meng Hao was even able to see one area which had been set aside to grow... the most precious of materials.

Countless Immortal creatures flew about in the sky, and the sounds of happiness filled the air. At one point, an Immortal crane flew by Meng Hao, and unexpectedly... it turned its head to look at him curiously.

That single glance left his mind reeling.

“This isn’t an illusion. What I’m seeing... isn’t a hallucination, but... real? I’m actually traveling back into ancient times with this land mass?” Even as Meng Hao was reeling in shock, the other cultivators were looking around, equally astonished.

Everything around them looked beautiful and wonderful, and yet Meng Hao could sense that within the beauty, there was immense, deadly

danger!

Although he wasn't sure what exactly was so dangerous, there was no time to ponder the matter. He took a deep breath and pushed forward even faster, flying past the 8-Essences Paragons.

Everyone was going all out with their cultivation bases, trying to build up as much speed as possible. They proceeded along for an undetermined period of time, and soon, the buildings around them were completely restored. The mountains and rivers, and in fact the entire aura of the land, was that of ancient times. All of the people were completely solid and visible to the eye. It was at this point that Meng Hao and the rest of the group spotted the border of the land mass up ahead, as well as the bridge.

Before, that bridge had been made of flesh and blood, but now, it was permeated with Immortal qi, making it an Immortal bridge. There were people on it, chatting and laughing, and when they noticed Meng Hao and the rest of the group, they stopped in place and looked over.

One of them was a young man. When he spoke, his voice was clear and filled with dignity. "Excuse me, Fellow Daoists, may I ask what has you in such a panic?"

His words caused Meng Hao's face to turn grim. Jin Yunshan's pupils constricted, and Sha Jiudong and the Sect Leader looked on with flickering expressions. Everyone else in the group gasped.

Although they were aware that the lands they were in appeared to have returned to ancient times, and had even seen people looking at them as they sped along, they had still harbored hope that maybe it was all just a fluke....

But now, with people actually talking to them, they realized that they really were back in ancient times.

"Ancient times.... Ancient times...." As Meng Hao looked around at everything, something suddenly occurred to him. He remembered a vision he had experienced recently, and suddenly began to pant. Then he looked up into the sky, and his face fell.

“Get out of here immediately!” he said loudly. “Do it however you can, otherwise... we’ll face deadly catastrophe!!” Even as the words left his mouth, he waved his hand, sucking his two 8-Essences Paragon subordinates into his bag of holding.

His two subordinates had never seen him act this way, and as such, didn’t refuse. After they allowed Meng Hao to place them in his bag of holding, he bit his tongue, spitting out a mouthful of blood to unleash an escape magic he had acquired from Shui Dongliu’s legacy. His speed increased dramatically, instantly placing him upon the bridge itself. A huge wind blasted out as he sped along.

Everyone else in the group was taken aback. Meng Hao’s words caused their hearts to begin to thump. There was no need for them to ponder whether he might be deceiving them. The things which were happening around them were simply too strange. They immediately unleashed divine abilities, holding nothing back in their charge toward the bridge.

The young man on the bridge frowned, then snorted coldly. He extended both hands, and was just about to prepare to block the way, when suddenly a sound like thunder echoed out in the vast blue sky up above.

The sound of the thunder instantly caused all of the cultivators’ minds to reel, and their bodies to involuntarily shiver. It was the same even with Meng Hao. His face fell as all of his doubts were swept away. He was now absolutely certain that this was the day... that he had seen in the vision, when Allheaven’s finger destroyed the world!

Only moments ago, he had sensed fluctuations coming from the ninth land mass, which indicated that someone was facing a Tribulation!!

Suddenly, colors flashed in the sky, and the sound of thunder exploded out. Heaven and Earth shook violently, and all living beings in the world looked up. The young man on the bridge ignored Meng Hao and the others as he stared up into the sky, shocked.

Meng Hao flashed past the young man like lightning, and even as he reached the end of the bridge, an icy coldness began to descend.

Without thinking about it, he looked back and saw... all of the land

masses quaking. Mountains shook and rivers seethed as a gigantic finger began to descend from up above!!

The finger was so big that it filled the entire sky, and as the living beings of the world looked up, their faces were filled with complete astonishment and disbelief.

To Meng Hao, even just looking at the finger caused so much pressure to crush down on him that his head felt stabs of pain, and blood sprayed out of his mouth.

“This level of power far exceeds what I felt when I faced Allheaven earlier. Based on what I saw in the visions, this time period was when Allheaven... was at a peak level of power!!”

He coughed up another mouthful of blood and pushed forward with even greater speed. At the same time that he shot off the bridge, the Sect Leader, along with Jin Yunshan, the Second Paragon, Sha Jiudong, and everyone else, stepped onto it.

No one spoke; there was no time. They unleashed all the speed they could muster to race across the bridge and toward the exit of the necropolis.

Jin Yunshan almost immediately transformed into a golden sun, and a series of after images could be seen stretching out behind him as his speed increased dramatically. As for Sha Jiudong, his body shrank down, transforming into a stream of sand that merged with the wind and sped along at top speed.

The Sect Leader took a deep breath, then took a step forward. Although that steep seemed to carry him only a few meters ahead, he actually traveled 30,000 meters! It was as if he were transforming an entire swath of land into a tiny stretch of space.

Everyone else used different, varied methods to speed through the world toward the exit. It was at this point that, behind them, the Heavenly finger which filled the sky began to descend onto the first land mass.

That finger was like a world unto itself, moving with such incredible

speed that it gave birth to Heavenly fire. A sea of flames spread out starting from the fingertip, and as that happened, a howl rose up from far off in the distance.

“Allheaven!!” the voice shouted, filled with rage and pain. Even as it echoed out, the finger... made contact with the land!

The surface of the land shattered. Countless sects were crushed, and countless mountains were reduced to rubble. Cities and statues fell, rivers and vegetation were destroyed....

All of the people living on the land were killed in that same moment, unable to struggle or even fight back. Their bodies... were instantly transformed into ash.

One cultivator after another was incinerated, and in the blink of an eye, the entire first land mass... became a place of death. The Immortal creatures, the precious materials, everything vanished.

The group of people on the bridge, including that young man, were shredded to pieces. Their flesh and blood splashed about, turning the bridge red, filling it with gore....

It was as if an invisible shockwave were blasting out, destroying everything that it touched....

The shockwave continued out past the borders of the land mass, spreading out into the cities which floated on the outside. They were all transformed into ruins, and everyone who lived there was killed.

Meng Hao and the other cultivators from the Vast Expanse School were all fleeing for their lives!

One of the 8-Essences Paragons was a bit too slow, and was overtaken by the shockwave. He began to tremble, and was then transformed into ash. When the rest of the group saw this, their minds reeled. Looking back at the incoming shockwave, they pushed more power out of their cultivation bases, even detonating magical items to gain more speed.

Meng Hao's face was very grim as he sped along, the fastest of the entire group. As the exit neared, he suddenly heard another shrill cry echoing out

from one of the distant land masses.

“Allheaven!!” The voice said exactly the same thing it had before, but the tone was different this time. It contained sadness, insanity, and boundless enmity. In that instant, the world was plunged into sinister coldness.

Those words filled the entire world with never-ending hatred!

Meng Hao didn't look back. He continued onward, a blur as he stepped into the exit. Even as he was about to leave the necropolis, he suddenly... sensed some very familiar fluctuations. A tremor ran through him, and he stopped in place, slowly turning his head to look behind him.

When that happened, he saw a glittering beam of light shooting out from the ninth land mass toward the enormous finger. Within that beam of light... was a copper mirror!!

Within the mirror was a cold, detached figure, a colorful parrot whose eyes blazed like lightning. It was a majestic sight as the parrot slammed head first into Allheaven's finger!

“The copper mirror...” Meng Hao thought, his mind reeling. Under no circumstances could he ever have imagined... that he would see the copper mirror in this place!

Chapter 1447: Yeah, I Am!

Meng Hao stood there, one foot in the exit, a gentle force tugging at him, as if to pull him out. However, there was absolutely no way he would let his other foot step into the exit.

Trembling, he looked back at what was happening in the distant sky. The copper mirror... was something that had changed his life. Inside that mirror was the parrot, who had become his friend, his comrade!

That made him think of the meat jelly. The parrot and the meat jelly were always at each other's throats, but... they had long since become like his family.

How could he ever forget the meat jelly's talkativeness, or the parrot's boasting? How could he forget how they had called themselves Lord Fifth and Lord Third? How could he forget the seafood song?

All of those things were there in his mind, to remain there for all time. In the end, in that critical life-or-death moment, the parrot had been willing to erase its mind for Meng Hao, and the meat jelly had sacrificed its undying life force.

In the end, one of his friend's consciousnesses was wiped out, and it was taken by those two powerful forces. The other turned into a lifeless husk which was now tucked away deep in Meng Hao's bag of holding.

"The parrot...." Meng Hao murmured. In that moment, Jin Yunshan whistled past him into the exit, and then vanished. After him was Sha Jiudong, and then the Sect Leader. All of them were rushing as fast as possible to escape.

As they left, they glanced over at Meng Hao and wondered what he was hesitating about. However, there was no time to ponder the matter, and they quickly left.

Meng Hao stood there, seemingly oblivious to the cultivators from the Vast Expanse School. As they flew past him, his eyes were glued on the copper mirror.

He saw the copper mirror slam into the finger, which trembled in response. Shockingly, the finger tilted back, and cracks began to spread out over its surface. The finger even began to tremble.

A grunt of surprise could be heard, and then the cracked finger flicked the copper mirror.

The copper mirror... shattered.

Nine shards... scattered about in all directions. Eight shards flew out into the starry sky, toward parts unknown. As for the main body of the mirror, it was not shattered, but grew dark and dull as it also flew out into the depths of the starry sky.

However... one of the shards of the mirror... landed on the third land mass....

Meng Hao saw it very clearly, and when he did, he began to shake. He was suddenly filled with the impulse to go to that third land mass and find that mirror shard!!

He had the feeling that if he could find that shard, then perhaps... he could once again sense the copper mirror. Maybe he could sense the parrot!

When the mirror shattered, the figure on the ninth land mass shot toward the finger, radiating grief and madness....

As for what happened to him, Meng Hao didn't see. He was completely focused on the third land mass. Most of the cultivators from the Vast Expanse had already escaped. However, there were two 8-Essences Paragons still rushing toward the exit. They were only about thirty meters away when they suddenly trembled and transformed into dust.

In that exact same moment, the bronze lamp inside of Meng Hao went as dim as if it had been extinguished. Meng Hao could sense that it was a moment of incredible danger, and that death was rushing toward him.

He knew that he was treading a razor-thin line between life and death, and yet he still chose to open his third eye. Using the third eye, he noted the exact location on the third land mass where the mirror shard had

landed, and committed it to memory.

By that time, death was almost right in front of him, like an invisible mouth preparing to consume him. In that moment, Meng Hao threw his head back and bellowed, stepped fully into the exit, and vanished.

A moment later, the ripples of death inundated the area where he had been standing.

Back on Planet Vast Expanse, in the teleportation portal formation on the half-planet....

Meng Hao materialized, coughing up a mouthful of blood. His face was pale, and yet his eyes were blazing as if with raging flames.

Everyone else looked completely bedraggled. Of the dozens of people who had gone into the necropolis, only twenty came out alive. The rest... had perished inside.

Meng Hao looked over at the Sect Leader and asked, "When can we go back in!?"

"At minimum, one year. However, there's no guarantee we can go back that soon. Various preparations must be made, and I also need to personally go ask Immortal Bai Wuchen to come with us! With her and the Second Paragon, we will have six peak 9-Essences cultivators. With you included, I'm very confident that we can open the passageway to the second land mass." The danger they had just faced did nothing to lessen the Sect Leader's resolve, and in fact, he was even more convinced than ever that they should go back.

With the Transcendence Daises, they all had a hope of Transcending!

Meng Hao stood there silently, then looked down at the teleportation portal upon which he stood. His heart was anything but calm; he had profited to an extreme level in this trip to the necropolis, most importantly, by getting a clue regarding the copper mirror. He was more determined than ever that he had to get back in!

"If I can find that mirror shard, then perhaps I could restore my connection to the copper mirror...." Meng Hao's eyes gleamed with

obsession. After a moment passed, he swished his sleeve, sending his two 8-Essences subordinates flying out, looking completely shaken. Although they had been inside Meng Hao's bag of holding, he had not sealed their ability to sense what was happening in the outside world.

When Meng Hao had stopped at the exit, the two 8-Essences Paragons had felt the extreme, deadly danger of the situation.

Meng Hao's face was grim as he stepped off of the teleportation portal. He was feeling a bit frustrated, the type that came when keen anticipation filled you, but there was no option other than to wait for what you wanted.

As he left the spell formation, Jin Yunshan was there up ahead of him. After returning to the Vast Expanse School itself, he had breathed a sigh of relief. Back in the necropolis, Meng Hao held the advantage. With countless ghosts at his beck and call, it created a deadly threat that gave Jin Yunshan no choice other than to bow his head. But now that they were back in the sect, although he wouldn't intentionally provoke Meng Hao, he could at least give him a dirty look.

It wasn't that he fundamentally had the desire to irritate Meng Hao, especially not with the oaths sworn by the Sect Leader and Sha Jiudong. However, after suppressing his feelings for so long in the necropolis, now that he was back in the Vast Expanse School, it was only natural that he would want to let off at least a little bit of steam.

Meng Hao's performance on the Transcendence Dais had been miraculous, and his battle against the Heavenly might astonishing. But Jin Yunshan was convinced that Meng Hao had done all that with the help of the ghosts. Following that line of reasoning, it meant that Meng Hao had never unleashed his ninth Essence, and Jin Yunshan... simply couldn't believe that he didn't actually have one. In his estimation, Meng Hao was keeping it hidden away as a trump card.

Therefore, he had no intention of actually fighting Meng Hao, but had no qualms about giving him a spiteful stare. And thus he did.

Meng Hao's eyes narrowed in response.

"Get out of my way," he said.

Jin Yunshan frowned. They were in a very open area, and although he really was standing in front of Meng Hao, it would be very simple for Meng Hao to simply walk around him.

“Trying to start something?” Jin Yunshan replied in a grim voice, his eyes turning even icier than before.

It was a single sentence, and a single cold look. How could Jin Yunshan have ever imagined that in response, Meng Hao’s eyes would turn cold, and he would say, “Yeah, I am!”

Even as the words left Meng Hao’s mouth, he lunged forward and unleashed a powerful fist strike.

That fist strike combined the powers of the Life-Extermination, Self-Immolation, God-Slaying, and Devil-Butchering fists. Lands shook and mountains were rocked. Colors flashed in the sky. It was a dazzling spectacle.

Jin Yunshan’s face fell. He had sustained serious injuries in the necropolis, and was currently only capable of fighting with seventy percent of his full power. When he realized that Meng Hao was suddenly attacking him, he quickly performed an incantation gesture to counterattack. A crashing boom echoed out between the two of them.

Jin Yunshan fell back, trembling, feeling more insulted than ever. Blood sprayed out of his mouth, and his eyes gleamed with madness.

The truth of the matter was... he really had no intention of fighting with Meng Hao. In his mind, standing there as he had been was nothing excessive. All he had done was cast a dirty stare in Meng Hao’s direction. He hadn’t done anything deliberately provocative, only acted a bit cold.

Unfortunately for him, he had no idea what kind of a lunatic he had provoked....

He had no idea, and in fact, no one did. The Sect Leader was smiling wryly, and Sha Jiudong groaned inwardly. The Second Paragon’s eyes went wide; although he was aware of how overbearing Meng Hao could be, he had never imagined that he would see something like this happening.

Clearly... Meng Hao was in a bad mood, and needed to vent on someone. And that someone turned out to be Jin Yunshan....

Booming sounds rang out. Jin Yunshan felt insulted and enraged. Even as he performed an incantation gesture to unleash a divine ability, Meng Hao transformed into a huge roc. Rumbling sounds could be heard as countless feathers swirled into the air, and at the same time, his Hexing magics combined!

One boom after another rang out. Jin Yunshan was already injured, and had been cowed by Meng Hao in the necropolis. He had no desire whatsoever to fight, and as such, was beaten back no matter what he did.

The Sect Leader shook his head wryly. Finally, he and Sha Jiudong jumped in and separated Meng Hao and Jin Yunshan, who glared angrily at each other as they were pulled back.

“You psycho!” said Jin Yunshan, almost yelling. He felt more insulted and maligned than ever. “You think you can just go around hitting people because you’re in a bad mood? Wasn’t our grudge resolved already? I gave you that bracelet of holding!!”

When Meng Hao recalled the matter of the bracelet of holding, his expression softened, and he cleared his throat. He wanted to say something, but couldn’t think of anything appropriate. In the end... it was true. Because of being in a bad mood, he had been looking for trouble.

With a cold snort, he turned and flew off toward Ninth Paragon City, where he immediately went into secluded meditation.

“Psycho! Madman!” Jin Yunshan glared at the departing Meng Hao, and vowed to himself that he would get revenge somehow. But then he thought about how Meng Hao had lasted for sixteen days on the Transcendence Dais, and about how vastly separated they were in terms of power. Meng Hao hadn’t even used his ninth Essence! Most importantly, he was essentially invincible when in the necropolis, and there were surely many more trips to the necropolis coming in the future. Finally, he gave up on the idea of getting revenge.

“Dammit. I definitely have to make sure not to stand in that psycho’s

way in the future!”

Chapter 1448: A Year....

It would be easier to find a phoenix feather or a qilin horn than to find someone in the Vast Expanse School who knew about what exactly had happened in the necropolis. The group which went inside sustained serious casualties: numerous 8-Essences Paragons were killed, and the Sixth and Eighth Paragons also died.

To the Vast Expanse School, that was a huge loss. However, to the individuals who survived, the benefits were immense!

8-Essences Paragons, 9-Essences Paragons, and even the handful of peak 9-Essences Paragons all spent time on the Transcendence Dais, and gained different levels of enlightenment regarding their future path. Although the paths ahead of them were not clear, their time in the necropolis ensured that the mistiness which covered them was lifted to some degree. Each and every individual believed that if they were given the opportunity to seek further enlightenment, then... the impossibility of reaching Transcendence... might change into a distinct possibility.

Although the benefits to the 8-Essences Paragons were not as great as those received by the 9-Essences experts, they were still significant. There were even some who were already gaining an understanding of their ninth Essence, and who would surely advance by leaps and bounds.

It was possible to say that, although the Vast Expanse School had experienced significant losses, the benefits to those who had survived were worth it. All of them went into secluded meditation as soon as they returned.

Meng Hao sat in his secluded meditation temple, his expression calm. He thought back to everything which had occurred in the necropolis, and his face gradually filled with a cold, unyielding expression.

He refused to give in to the idea that he could not form the Ninth Hex.

“Allheaven fears the Immortal, and his power is of the same origin as my Demonic power. This matter... is bizarre, to say the least.” After a moment of silence, his eyes glittered, and he smiled coldly.

“I can’t use this body of mine to form the Ninth Hex. If I try, I will fail.... The Ninth Hex would transform me, causing the foundation of the Immortal to appear again, and allow me to tread that path once more.

“The thing is, I don’t care whether or not I’m the Immortal. I just care about getting stronger. Immortal? Fine. Demon? Great. I don’t care, as long as I can get that ninth Essence, as long as I can extinguish the bronze lamp, as long as I can Transcend!” His eyes shone with a thoughtful gleam. If he couldn’t personally form the Ninth Hex, then he had to find some way to get someone else to help do it for him!

“Who would have thought that turning the Seal the Heavens Incantation into the Ninth Hex would cause Immortal transformation.... I suppose I could pick something else for the Ninth Hex. Maybe that would work....” He frowned.

“But that would be such a waste.” He sighed, and then suddenly, his eyes glittered as a strange idea popped up into his mind.

“Hmm....” His eyes flickered even more brightly, until he suddenly rose to his feet and began to pace back and forth in the temple. After a moment, he stopped in place.

“If this body is not suitable to form the Ninth Hex, then... what if I create a clone without any Demonic power? He would have almost no connection to me at all. Perhaps that clone could form the Ninth Hex!!

“If a Demon cannot form the Ninth Hex, then maybe an Immortal... can successfully make the Seal the Heavens Hex!

“If the clone succeeds, and my true self merges with the clone, then... I will still get the Ninth Hex in the end!” Meng Hao’s eyes began to shine brightly.

“Although it might be a bit difficult, at least I have a direction!

“The Seal the Heavens Hex incites Immortal meridians. In that case, if my clone has a pure Immortal body, then its chances for success would increase exponentially.” The more he thought about it, the more feasible it seemed.

“This clone’s mission... will be to finish the Ninth Hex!” His eyes gleamed with determination as he thought back to all of the various cloning magics he possessed. One of them was the True Self Dao, and he also had a magical technique from Shui Dongliu’s legacy.

However, none of those cloning methods could do the job perfectly. He needed a clone with no Demonic power, that could gain enlightenment of the Ninth Hex, and that he could then re-absorb.

“It won’t work unless... that clone is truly me. Even if my true self dies, the clone can live on. That type of clone would be truly independent, and yet would still be something that could merge back with me!” With that, he reached up and pressed down onto his forehead.

Rumbling filled his mind as suddenly... three Nirvana Fruits appeared!

As the Nirvana Fruits hovered in front of him, emitting dazzling light, Meng Hao smiled.

“Seventh Year Tribulation.... If Shui Dongliu could come up with that elaborate plan for the Mountains and Seas all because of the strange factors within the Fang Clan bloodline, then naturally, I can do something similar!

“My clone will be different than any other type of clone. And that is because... he will be... my fourth life!!” At this point, he closed his eyes, causing their shining brightness to disappear.

Back on Planet East Victory, his Seventh Year Tribulation had caused him to wither up, and in the process, produce a Nirvana Fruit. That had occurred twice. In the seventh year of his second life, he had withered up again, and in the process of beginning his third life, produced a second Nirvana Fruit.

In that third life, his parents had accompanied him to Planet South Heaven, where he began his whirlwind of a life, a life that had led up to this very day.

Now, he wanted to forcibly begin... his fourth life. However, he wouldn’t do it with his true self, but rather, a clone. His third life and his fourth life

would both exist simultaneously!

It was a situation in which the roots would be the same, but the branches would be different. Fusing would also be no problem, because the bodies would be fundamentally exactly the same! At the same time, his fourth life would be a complete separation from his third life, ensuring that no Demonic power existed on the clone.

“I can use that clone to seek enlightenment of the Ninth Hex!” He took a deep breath and sat down cross-legged. Then, he pushed down on his forehead again. Rumbling sounds began to echo out as he used his Nirvana Fruits to form the body of his fourth life.

The divine ability involved required time. As Meng Hao sat there, eyes closed, life force streamed out of the Nirvana Fruits and converged upon his forehead, where it gradually began to grow stronger.

It was only a bit of life force, like a brewing seed.

Time passed. A year went by, during which time the Sect Leader sent word to Meng Hao that the preparations to go into the necropolis again required an additional, undetermined length of time.

Although Meng Hao was anxious to get back into the necropolis, the brewing clone also needed time.

Another year passed.

Meng Hao's clone was in a constant state of growth, and was rapidly reaching the point when it could begin to live his fourth life.

There in front of Meng Hao, a blurry figure could be seen. It was impossible to make out the facial features clearly, but its aura was completely different from Meng Hao's. However, Meng Hao could sense that there was some connection between the two of them, a connection that would be extremely difficult to sever.

“Three years of refining. This clone will live my fourth life. The root is the same, but the branches are different. He doesn't have an iota of Demonic power.... Before he turns seven, I will send him into the mortal world to experience life. Seven years later, his memories will awaken.

When that happens, I will be him, and he will be me. However no one else will be able to detect the connection between us, our shared root. At that time, my clone can begin to cultivate the Ninth Hex!

“I can’t rush things. The Ninth Hex is critical for me being able to Transcend!” Meng Hao looked at the blurry figure in front of him, then waved his hand. The figure transformed into a beam of light which flew out at top speed. Flying along with it was a red beam of light which, upon closer examination, could be seen to contain a tiny mastiff.

The light flew out of the half planet’s starry sky and onto Planet Vast Expanse itself. Somewhere in the land mass that belonged to Meng Hao, it vanished.

He didn’t deign to do anything to hide the matter. After all, the only people who could detect it would be the handful of people in the peak of the 9-Essences level. None of them who were watching would pay much attention to such a thing.

To them, Meng Hao was a lunatic. And lunatics... were people to be avoided. That was especially true of this particular lunatic, who was invincible within the necropolis, and could not be provoked.

Jin Yunshan and Sha Jiudong both felt that way. As for the mysterious Immortal Bai Wuchen, she kept herself separate from worldly affairs, and had no interest in matters like that.

Deep beneath the surface of the half-planet, the Sect Leader sat on the turtle shell above the sea of flames. A profound gleam appeared in his eyes, the glow of augury. After a moment passed, he slowly lowered his head.

“What divine ability was that? How come I can’t see it clearly? This Ninth Paragon is wrapped up in too many secrets.

“Well, those things are all trivial anyway.” The Sect Leader smiled, then closed his eyes. Meng Hao was now more important than ever, considering how things had gone in the necropolis. His battle prowess placed him among the Potentates, and the Sect Leader didn’t want to incur his displeasure by being overly curious.

In the year that passed, things were quiet in the Vast Expanse School. Although Meng Hao's subordinates continued to expand his power and influence on the outside, on Planet Vast Expanse itself, everything was peaceful, and no major incidents occurred.

All of the most powerful experts were in secluded meditation.

Something else happened during that year. In the starry sky of the Vast Expanse, a young man appeared. He wore a green robe and had long white hair, and was accompanied by a gentle-looking woman. They entered the Vast Expanse from the outside, and came to a stop at a location near the Immortal God Continent. As soon as they entered, the Vast Expanse began to seethe, and threatening rumbling sounds began to echo out. Some unknown force within the Vast Expanse immediately began to try to expel the white-haired young man. Apparently, if the man were to attempt to stay here, then the entire Vast Expanse would spare no effort to eject him with all its might. 1

He looked at the Immortal God Continent, and mixed emotions played out on his face. After a while, he sighed. The woman standing next to him seemed unable to endure the sight, and closed her eyes.

"I severed that finger all those years ago, and starting then, it became very difficult to enter this Vast Expanse. There are so many memories tied up with that land mass. It's a good thing... it's all in the past now. Those people aren't who they used to be anyway. What use is it for them to call to me...?" The young man sighed.

"Severing that finger evoked such hatred against me... bone-deep hatred!

"As for the Fellow Daoist still wrapped up with that same hatred... once he Transcends, he'll understand everything." The white-haired young man turned. Along with the woman, he left the Vast Expanse, after which the expelling force which had risen up slowly faded away.

Another thing happened in that year. Outside of Planet Vast Expanse was a cultivator clan which was said to have existed since ancient times. The person who had led them in their recent comeback was a female Chosen, and during that year, she joined the Vast Expanse School. After

being accepted into the Sect Leader's division, the Sect Leader himself appeared, which was rare. Looking at her surname, he asked her what her given name was.

The woman smiled and replied. "Bei. Disciple Han Bei at your service."

The final event which occurred during that year occurred on the border of the ninth land mass of Planet Vast Expanse. There, a small forested mountain could be seen, beneath which flowed a river. A middle-aged scholar was sitting next to that river, reading a book. Suddenly, he looked up and saw a sleeping baby floating along above the surface of the river.

The baby had a wooden tablet lying on his chest, with a name written on it. Fang Mu. Within the baby's hand was a fruit that seemed to be made of gold or jade, and yet wasn't. An aura like that of reincarnation could be detected, as well as the Dao of Nirvana. Next to the baby was a little dog, which was happily licking the baby's cheek.

The water parted for the baby, and fish leaped up excitedly. The sunlight didn't dare to strike the baby too harshly, and the countless beasts which peeked out from within the trees of the forest wouldn't harm a hair on his head.

*

1. Yes, the clues so far seem to point to this guy being Wang Lin.

Chapter 1449: Haowie

On the border of the ninth continent of Planet Vast Expanse was a river which snaked back and forth to parts unknown, dotted on either side by little villages.

One of them was called Peach Blossom Village.

A few hundred people lived in the village, and generally speaking, they all got along well with each other. Supposedly, they descended from a group that migrated to this location from one of the great clans many years in the past. Exactly what happened along the way was unknown, but years later, Peach Blossom Village came to be.

Most of the people who live there made a living by hunting or fishing. In the morning, smoke would curl up from kitchen chimneys, and at night, the stars twinkled in the sky. It was a peaceful and auspicious place....

Occasionally, though, a commotion would break out, and one might even hear shouts of rage....

“Fang Mu! Haowie! When I get my hands on you I’m gonna spank that little butt of yours!” 1

“I don’t care what you say, I’ve had enough. Stop right there, Fang Mu! If you try to run, I’ll just have to go have a word or two with that drunkard father of yours!”

“That’s my rooster! Y-y-you... you can’t take my rooster!”

On one particular morning, as smoke rose from the chimneys, cries like this echoed out in the village. The voices belonged to the elderly, the village grownups, and even children.

Meanwhile, a six-year-old boy was hiding in the bushes in a far corner of the village, looking very pleased with himself. He was handsome, with eyes that glittered like stars and skin as smooth as jade. He wore rough, hemp garments, and even had some mud smudged on his face, but that couldn’t conceal the clever, intelligent gleam in his eyes.

His hand was clasped around the throat of a chicken. At first glance, the

chicken appeared to be struggling, but closer examination revealed that it was trembling. It trembled, not because of the boy, but because of the hunting dog that was stretched out on the ground off to the side.

The dog lay there lazily, and yet it emanated an invisible pressure. Whenever the chicken started to struggle, the dog would growl, and the chicken would instantly sag listlessly in fright.

Some time passed, and the village eventually quieted down. The boy licked his lips, then slowly began to tip-toe his way back through the village, chicken in hand. The hunting dog followed along, also licking its lips.

"This isn't for you," the boy whispered, "so don't even think about it. This is my tuition!" He threaded his way through the village until he found himself in front of a somewhat dilapidated house, whereupon he gave the gate an urgent kick.

"Master!" he whispered. "Open up. Hurry!"

The gate opened, revealing a slovenly old man. He reached out, dragged the boy inside, then looked around to see if anyone had noticed before closing the gate.

As soon as he was inside the courtyard, the boy spoke in a loud voice, "Master, you old fogey, I brought this rooster as my tuition. I want to study Immortal magic!"

The old man wasn't very tall, and had a hunched back. He turned and looked at the boy with narrowed eyes, then looked at the chicken, and began to salivate.

"Excellent. Excellent," he said, sounding very serious. "Ah, you know how to bring gifts to your Master, kid, you really have potential. Alright, fine. After I deal with this evil creature, I'll teach you some Immortal magic!"

"You just wait here for a bit while I convert the wicked, shameless beast!" With that, he grabbed the chicken and took a few steps toward the house.

"Master, how are you going to convert it?" asked the boy, eyes wide with

curiosity.

“No peeking,” the old man said sternly. “Master is going to be using some magic, so you’ll probably smell something strange. There’s not much spiritual energy in this remote place, plus I’m injured, so I’m counting on you to act as Dharma Protector.

“Haowie, I’m placing my life in your hands. You must do a good job as Dharma Protector.”

The young boy nodded excitedly in response.

The old man entered the house, and a few moments later, a miserable squawk could be heard. Then came the sound of feathers being plucked, and the hiss of boiling water. Before long, a fragrant aroma drifted out.

The boy was very curious, and after a bit of time, couldn’t help but ask, “Master, since this evil creature is a monster, why is it so weak? I caught it almost without even trying.”

“That’s because Master used some magic earlier to drain its power.” By this point, it sounded like someone was eating a meal inside the house.

“Master, I’ve helped you catch a lot of monsters throughout the years. In fact, the village is almost completely cleared out of the things. That’s why my dad spans me all the time. When are we going to leave the village to kill some monsters and fiends?”

“Oh, there’s no hurry. Yesterday, I noticed a mutt in the yard of Old Zhu’s house on the west side of the village. You should bring that dog over to me for inspection. It’s also an evil creature!” The sounds of ravenous devouring could now be heard in the courtyard.

The boy looked quietly up into the sky.

“Master, my dad’s temper is really bad. A few days ago when he was spanking me, he said I was the reason he failed in the Imperial examinations.

“Oh, another thing. He said I got picked up out of the river, right?

“I’ve been having a lot of dreams lately. I dream about weird people and

strange things. I even see people flying around. Something about all of it seems really familiar. It's almost like someone is calling out to me, as if... there are two me's." The boy seemed to have difficulty expressing what exactly he wanted to say, and the more he talked, the more confused he seemed.

At some point, the slovenly old man had emerged from his house, and was now standing in front of the boy, looking at him.

"Don't let your imagination run too wild," he said, yawning. "Two you's? You're talking about a clone, and only very powerful people can have clones. Yes... powerful people like your Master. Tell me, based on your feeling, where is this other version of you?"

"There...." said the boy, rising to his feet and pointing off in a certain direction, a blank look on his face. "There. Very, very far away. I dreamed about a huge temple, and lots of mountains."

"Hahaha! Master knows exactly what place you're talking about. That's the Ninth Sect! The Vast Expanse School's Ninth Sect. Now that I think about it, the Ninth Sect has been recruiting disciples in this area recently. If you serve Master well, I might be able to recommend you." The old man chuckled. Seeing the blank look on the boy's face, he reached out and tousled his hair.

"Alright, fine. You've always loved to let your imagination run wild. Poor kid. Okay, I'm going to teach you some amazing Immortal magic today. It's a natural Heavenly Dao, something Heaven-shaking and Earth-shattering, something that ghosts and gods alike revere. We're talking about the essence of life here, the origin of all magics, the Dao of all Daos!" The boy's previous confusion was gone, and now he seemed excited.

"Let's go!" said the old man, looking up at the evening sky. He led the way out of the courtyard and then down a little path behind the house. The boy followed along, as did the lazy dog.

They walked along for awhile until it was dark, whereupon they reached the back courtyard of a certain house. The old man looked this way and

that, then leaped over the wall and into the courtyard with the boy. Then, he whispered, "You're definitely not allowed to see what will happen in a moment. Just listen. There's going to be a sermon on the Dao, understand? Master is going to be doing some cultivating. You just stand there and watch me as I, er, I mean, you stand watch as Dharma Protector."

The boy's heart began to pound, and he nodded eagerly. Looking pleased, the old man walked over and entered the house. Moments later, the boy heard the voice of a woman.

"What took you so long, you old bastard?"

"I'm here now, heh heh. Alright, let's hurry things up. I'm going to perform some magic for you...."

Soon, some very strange noises could be heard coming from inside the house. The boy's eyes went wide. He didn't quite understand what was happening, but he suddenly remembered that Widow Li often had male visitors coming and going, bringing her various gifts.

"So, it turns out Widow Li is a cultivator!" he murmured. He was so engrossed in listening to what was happening that he didn't notice something behind him. At some point, a blurry figure had appeared. Of course, even if the boy hadn't been so engrossed, he probably still wouldn't have noticed.

It was a young man wearing a green robe. He looked like a scholar, except his expression was cold. He appeared on the scene without making the slightest sound, although his arrival caused the starlight to distort somewhat. The hunting dog shivered, and a warm look appeared in its eyes.

"Seventh Year Tribulation.... Tonight, my clone's Seventh Year Tribulation will come.... After the tribulation, his memories will eventually return. Then, he will be me, and I will be him." That young man was none other than Meng Hao, and this boy was the clone he had sent into the mortal world to live his fourth life. He was also the clone who would seek enlightenment of the Ninth Hex.

"It should be coming any time now," Meng Hao said softly. In almost the

exact same instant that the words left his mouth, a tremor ran through the boy, and he coughed up a mouthful of blood. He let out a sudden cry as his body began to wither.

The sudden cry startled the old man, and also rang out through the quiet night to be heard by other villagers. The old man rushed out of the house, and when he saw the boy, a look of sincere concern appeared on his face. The truth was that he really did care for the child, and because of that, he quickly ran over and pushed his hand down onto his forehead. Nothing happened. The old man's face fell. He knew that some vile ailments were best treated by medicinal plant concoctions prepared by doctors, so he scooped the boy up in his arms and raced through the village toward the doctor's house.

It was a sleepless night for most of the villagers in Peach Blossom Village. At some point, dark, churning clouds had filled the sky, though no rain fell. Thunder boomed, and gradually a mist built up. Strangely, the mist was violet-colored, and roiled as if countless terrifying entities existed inside of it whose roars echoed out into the night.

The little boy who had somehow come to be known as Haowie lay trembling in the courtyard of the doctor's house. Many villagers were present, including the slovenly old man. There was also a middle-aged scholar who, despite wearing his scholar's robe, had a stubbly beard, and held a flagon of alcohol in his hand. His eyes were blank and unfocused.

This was the boy's father. Years ago, he hadn't been like this. However, after failing the Imperial examinations, he had abandoned himself to despair. He was as drunk as usual, and had been physically dragged over to the doctor's house by one of the other villagers.

"I can't save him," the doctor said, sighing.

When the middle-aged scholar heard that, he looked over at the boy he had picked up out of the river, who was now withered and gaunt. The scholar shivered, then raised his alcohol flagon and took a long swig.

"He's better off dead...." he murmured, sounding pained.

The other villagers in the courtyard sighed sadly. Although the boy was

often a bit naughty, to see him die of illness like this was very distressing.

Meng Hao currently hovered up above, looking down silently at the events playing out. Just when he was about to reach out his hand, though, something happened.

“Who said he’s better off dead! Haowie’s not going to die!” The old man strode forward, eyes bloodshot as he once again took the boy into his arms.

“He’s not going to die, you hear me?!” he yelled. “He’s just sick, right? You people can’t save him, and his dad doesn’t care, but I’m his Master and I care!” With that, the old man carried the boy away.

Everyone was shocked, and instantly devolved into a hubbub of voices. Suddenly, people saw the old man erratically flying up into the air, which caused the entire village to break out into an even bigger commotion.

Meng Hao hovered there, watching thoughtfully. Gradually, he faded away. He could sense that his clone was gradually awakening, and that soon, there would truly be two versions of himself.

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1. In Chinese, the nickname I translate as “Haowie” is based on the “Hao” character in his name. The nickname itself rhymes with a Chinese word that means “mouse.” In this chapter, the actual word for “mouse” is used as the nickname, although it would sound exactly the same as Meng Hao’s nickname, so I decided to keep “Haowie”.

Chapter 1450: Joining the Sect!

“Maybe mortals can’t save him,” said the old man through gritted teeth as he floated up into the air, “but cultivators can!” His cultivation base wasn’t very high, and he had been seriously injured years ago. His longevity was nearing its end, and therefore flight was only possible for him by burning some of his life force quintessence. Even that wasn’t something he could do for extended periods of time.

He had once thought that he would simply grow old and die in Peach Blossom Village. He had never imagined that he would encounter this young boy who he now held in his arms. In fact, it wasn’t really the scholar who had raised the boy, it was this old man who had guided him through his young life.

“It’s just some illness, right?!” the old man growled. Soon, he had flown to the peak of a nearby mountain. There, he very gingerly pulled a jade slip out of his garment, an old jade slip that was worn and almost broken. After pulling it out, he looked down at it with a bit of hesitation. This was the most precious item he possessed, and even he wasn’t sure where it came from. However, he was certain that the divine ability it contained was unique and profound.

Sadly, his latent talent was only average, and he had never been able to cultivate it successfully. However, he distinctly remembered how, back in the days when he had come to acquire it, numerous cultivators had been fighting over it, all of whom had seemed very powerful to him.

Gritting his teeth, he cast aside all hesitation, and pushed his finger down onto the surface of the jade slip. Instantly, he seemed to age even more, and yet, a seal opened on the jade slip. A majestic beam of light shot up into the sky that was visible even from a vast distance away.

Obviously, the old man had unsealed the jade slip in order to attract the attention of nearby cultivators, and was planning to offer the slip itself as payment for them to save the young boy.

The old man didn’t bother to ponder whether or not this course of action

could potentially be dangerous. In his mind, any danger was worth braving when compared to the hope it offered. After all, he clearly remembered seeing some disciples from the Vast Expanse School flying about recently, and after a bit of calculation, was certain it was recruitment season on the Vast Expanse School's ninth continent.

In the past, the Vast Expanse School had very strict requirements for new disciples, but in recent years the Ninth Sect had been expanding. Cultivators from the Ninth Sect had been combing the continent looking for children with exceptional latent talent, and taking them back to the sect to begin practicing cultivation.

The light hadn't been shining from the jade slip for very long before a few beams of light could be seen shooting through the air toward it. Three people became visible, all of them middle-aged men. They had extraordinary cultivation bases, and after they landed and saw the jade slip, their expressions flickered.

The slovenly old man immediately clasped hands and bowed deeply.

"May I ask if you are Fellow Daoists from the Vast Expanse School? I am Sun Dalei, a humble rogue cultivator. Today, I would like to offer this treasure in exchange for help from you Fellow Daoists. Please save this young boy's life."

The three cultivators looked at the boy, and then the leader of the small group made a grasping motion, causing the jade slip to fly over into his hand. After examining it for a moment, a smile broke out on his face.

"So, this jade slip contains a legacy." Laughing heartily, he waved his sleeve, sending a stream of spiritual energy into the boy. Then, without another look, he turned and prepared to leave, as did his two companions, who looked just as delighted as him.

The slovenly old man was getting very nervous. The boy was still in a withered state, and didn't really look much better than before. The old man suddenly blurted, "Fellow Daoists, this boy... has uncharacteristically rare latent talent. He has an enlightened soul, spirit bones, and spirit-attuned blood vessels!"

The three cultivators stopped in their tracks. The man with the jade slip frowned. Their mission was to find disciples with exceptional latent talent, and the bizarre transformations of Heaven and Earth which had struck the nearby village was why they had come to this location in the first place. That was also why they had shown up so quickly in response to the light from the jade slip.

After hearing the old man's words, the cultivator who had taken the jade slip walked over to the boy's side and placed his hand onto his forehead. After a thorough examination, the man began to tremble.

"Junior Brothers, you take a look too!" With that, the two other cultivators came over to inspect the boy. After they did, they seemed equally moved.

"That's Superlative latent talent!"

"He really does have spirit bones, an enlightened soul, and naturally-occurring spirit-refined blood!"

"Of all the fledglings we've found recently, he's the best by far!!"

The three cultivators' eyes burned with fervor. Because of the recent expansion of the Ninth Sect, more disciples were being recruited than ever. As for these three cultivators, if they found children in the mortal world who had exceptional latent talent, and then brought them back to the sect, they would receive handsome rewards in the form of cultivation resources.

The three immediately looked over at the slovenly old man and began to ask questions.

"What's this kid's name?" said one of them.

"Fang Mu!" replied the old man.

"Are you a relative of his? He's sick, and we need to take him back to the sect to be treated. Afterward we wish for him to become a disciple of the Vast Expanse School."

The old man immediately nodded in assent. As far as he was concerned,

Haowie's only chance at survival was to go to the Vast Expanse School, which was one of the sects that he believed to be trustworthy.

The three cultivators didn't say anything more. They picked the boy up, then transformed into beams of light that shot off into the distance. Soon, they reached a wide plain, in the middle of which was a teleportation portal. As was the norm, the teleportation portal was protected by a shield that would prevent anyone except cultivators of the Vast Expanse School from entering it.

The three stepped onto the teleportation portal, and moments later, glittering light rose up as they and the boy were teleported away.

Off in the distance, the slovenly old man could just barely see the light of teleportation, and he sighed. Although he didn't wish to part with the boy, an expression of anticipation could still be seen in his eyes.

He had known almost from the beginning that the boy named Fang Mu had incredible latent talent, talent that could shake Heaven and Earth. His original plan had been to wait for a few more years, then take the boy out into the world. He would call upon some of his old acquaintances in the cultivation world to get the boy a spot in a sect, and thus start him on his path of cultivation.

Even though the events of the day were somewhat coincidental, as far as the old man was concerned, Fang Mu being able to join the Vast Expanse School was a stroke of luck.

Eventually, the old man sighed and headed back to the village. As the moon shone down from above, the old man looked even older than before, and a bit more lonely.

The truth was that even if the old man hadn't brought the boy to the top of that mountain, the three cultivators from the Vast Expanse School would still have come. The transformations to Heaven and Earth that had occurred in the village had attracted them, and either way, they would have seen how special the boy was and taken him to their sect.

All of that had long since been arranged by Meng Hao.

It was the most convenient way to arrange for his clone to seek enlightenment of the Ninth Hex.

Meanwhile, a teleportation portal began to shine somewhere in the Ninth Sect. The three middle-aged cultivators appeared, carrying Meng Hao's clone. After stepping off of the teleportation portal, they headed toward the main temple of the sect.

Before long, rumbling sounds echoed out in the sect as several beams of light shot toward the temple. That attracted the attention of a lot of nearby disciples, who looked over in curiosity to see what was happening.

Inside the temple, several old men had just sat down cross-legged around Meng Hao's clone. All of them were pouring cultivation base power into his body, which was gradually recovering from its withered state.

"He really does have Superlative latent talent. In all my years, I've never seen anyone who actually has real, Superlative latent talent!"

"He even has spirit bones, an enlightened soul, and spirit-attuned blood vessels! He's not a child, he's a precious bodily treasure! I've never seen or even heard of anything like it!!"

"If this kid practices cultivation, he'll definitely make rapid progress!!"

The entire group was abuzz with conversation. Any other type of latent talent would not have provoked such a reaction. But he had Superlative latent talent, along with spirit bones, an enlightened soul, and spirit-attuned blood vessels. This clone of Meng Hao's was like a rare gem!

Soon, Meng Hao's clone was no longer withered, which the old men believed to be due to their treatment. However, he looked even thinner and weaker than he had before, and was apparently now in a very deep sleep.

"Take him to one of the side chambers and have someone look after him. When he wakes up, arrange for him to formally join the sect." The old men were all exhausted from their efforts. After making the necessary arrangements, they looked at Meng Hao's clone, excitement glittering in

their eyes. Finally, they returned to their own residences to start the breathing exercises necessary to restore their cultivation bases.

A few days later, Meng Hao's clone opened his eyes. At first he looked confused, but then his vision focused, and his eyes began to radiate bright, cold light.

It was very strange to see a look like that in the eyes of a young boy.

Soon, the coldness faded away, and his eyes returned to normal.

"I'm awake," he murmured. He felt as if he had just woken up from a dream. He could even sense his true self, deep beneath the surface of the main planet, on that half-planet, sitting there cross-legged in the Ninth Paragon's secluded meditation facilities.

As of this moment, Meng Hao's true self finally breathed a sigh of relief. At long last he could focus fully on seeking enlightenment of his eight Essences.

"This clone will live my fourth life. His only mission is to successfully form the Ninth Hex!

"As for his cultivation.... Well, I created the clone's body after carefully observing my own body, which was re-moulded by the bronze lamp. In all of Planet Vast Expanse, and in fact, in all of the Vast Expanse itself, it would be easier to find a phoenix feather or a qilin horn than it would be to find someone whose latent talent exceeds this clone's!

"Since that's the case, he can elevate his cultivation base much more quickly than normal. Rise to prominence in the Ninth Sect. Reach the pinnacle, step by step. It shouldn't be difficult.

"With no Demonic power, his body is pure in every sense of the word." A satisfied gleam appeared in Meng Hao's eyes.

Several days later, Meng Hao became a disciple of the Vast Expanse School. His latent talent shook the entire Ninth Sect, and when the Dao Realm Patriarch heard of the matter and investigated it personally, he dispatched people to Peach Blossom Village to make further inquiries and make sure nothing was amiss. Meng Hao was then sent to one of the

Ninth Sect's numerous subdivisions, where he became an Inner Sect disciple.

This year was tenth in which Meng Hao's true self was the Ninth Paragon.

This year, a disciple by the name of Han Bei became one of the sect's Holy Daughter-designates.

This year, Meng Hao's clone Fang Mu became the Inner Sect disciple one of the subdivisions of the Ninth Sect!

Neither the slovenly old man, nor the three cultivators who had brought the clone back to the sect, nor the old men who had treated his condition, nor anyone in all of Planet Vast Expanse, could ever have imagined what a dazzling flower this Fang Mu would bloom into. Only Meng Hao's true self knew.

He might shrivel away into nothing... or perhaps, he would blossom a bloody scarlet color....

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Note from Deathblade: In this and subsequent chapters, Er Gen often refers to the clone as simply Meng Hao. In some situations I've changed it to either "Fang Mu" or "Meng Hao's clone" to avoid confusion, but for the most part I'm keeping things as is. It really serves to emphasize that they are essentially the same person in two different bodies.

Chapter 1451: Han Bei's Secret!

The techniques of the Vast Expanse School were many and varied, and could be said to be all-encompassing. However, in terms of fundamentals, they were different than the magical techniques of the Mountain and Sea Realm. Instead of being driven by the energy of Heaven and Earth, they were driven by the energy of the Vast Expanse.

Cultivation in the Vast Expanse involved breathing techniques to absorb its energy, and resulted in forming a unique great Dao.

After he became an Inner Sect disciple, Meng Hao's seven-year-old clone resided in a special residence set aside for him by the sect. He rarely left his home, and as such, didn't know much about the outside world.

But that changed after a year passed. After only one year of practicing cultivation, Tribulation Lightning descended on Meng Hao's residence. It destroyed the house and shattered the courtyard, and caused widespread shock among the surrounding disciples of the Ninth Sect.

Even some of the old-timers were astonished by the 9 successive bolts of lightning which fell from the sky. Afterward, a young boy emerged from the wreckage of the courtyard residence.

Shockingly, he was accompanied by... the aura of Foundation Establishment!

Foundation Establishment in and of itself wasn't anything spectacular. However, the Tribulation Lightning was a bit of a surprise, and then some of the disciples realized that it was Meng Hao who had appeared from within it.

"If I remember correctly... he joined the sect last year, as a mortal...."

"How is that even possible? One year? One year!? He... he reached Foundation Establishment that quickly?"

"What's his name again? Oh right, Fang Mu. His name is Fang Mu!"

Meng Hao's clone Fang Mu experienced nine bolts of Tribulation Lightning, and reached Foundation Establishment. The news caused a

small-scale stir, but the sect as a whole was huge, and Meng Hao was merely an Inner Sect disciple in one of many subdivisions.

Normally speaking, it was a matter that would quickly become forgotten. Meng Hao might have extraordinary latent talent, and might have reached Foundation Establishment in only a year, but Foundation Establishment didn't count for much in the Ninth Sect as a whole. The number of Foundation Establishment cultivators in the sect was impossible to even count.

Even within that subdivision, they were as numerous as the hairs on an ox.

But... something happened a year later, in the same residence. Tribulation Lightning struck again, but this time, in greater number. 99 bolts of lightning fell onto the residence. Rumbling echoed out, and the residence and courtyard were destroyed. When Meng Hao emerged, he no longer emitted the aura of Foundation Establishment, but rather... Core Formation!!

The entire subdivision was thrown into a commotion that far exceeded that of the previous year. Countless people were completely shocked, even the Elders. The Subdivision Head personally came to investigate, and was astonished.

There were still plenty of people who were more powerful than him, but what was most shocking was the speed of his progress. To many people, such a thing was almost impossible to believe.

“Foundation Establishment in one year? Then Core Formation in another year? Don't tell me... he's going to reach Nascent Soul in a year too?”

“What type of latent talent does he have?”

By now, more and more people were talking about this Fang Mu. In fact, word was spreading outside his subdivision and into other subdivisions.

Then... the third year passed. 999 bolts of Tribulation Lightning descended, and Meng Hao reached Nascent Soul!

In the fifth year, he reached Spirit Severing, and 9,999 lightning bolts fell. All subdivisions of the Ninth Sect were completely shaken. The rainstorm-like hail of Tribulation Lightning shook the whole Ninth Sect, and Fang Mu's name was the subject of countless conversations.

In the seventh year, his moment of reaching Dao Seeking was a grand occasion for vast numbers of cultivators in the Ninth Sect. Numerous cultivators watched as a tempest of Tribulation Lightning bolts descended, only one lightning bolt short of 100,000. It was a power of Tribulation that very few Dao Seeking cultivators could fight back against. It was as if Heaven and Earth, as if the Vast Expanse, were trying to completely wipe Meng Hao's clone out of existence!

However, as the lightning fell onto the clone, his eyes shone brightly. It was as if... he was directly opposing the Vast Expanse!

The lightning fell for ten days, after which Meng Hao's clone was in Dao Seeking!

Time flew. The tenth year arrived.

Ten years ago, Meng Hao's clone had been nothing more than a weak child. But now, ten years later, he was a handsome and extraordinary young man. He stood tall and straight atop one of the mountains in the Ninth Sect, looking up into the sky, which rumbled as Tribulation Lightning began to build up.

It was... Immortal Tribulation!

In ten short years, Meng Hao's clone had created a legend on Planet Vast Expanse, even a myth!

In ten years, he went from being a mortal, to reaching Foundation Establishment, Core Formation, Nascent Soul, Spirit Severing, Dao Seeking, and Immortal Ascension!

That was a process that some people never completed within their whole lifetime, and yet Meng Hao's clone did it in ten years. The entire Ninth Sect was shaken, as was the Vast Expanse School as a whole. Even Paragons got wind of it.

The Immortal Tribulation was even more stunning than the tribulations from before it. 1,000,000 lightning bolts descended onto the ninth continent, causing all the lands to shake. People flew up into the air from all the other sects that were part of the Vast Expanse School, all to watch the Immortal Tribulation.

The Ninth Sect was very excited, and even sent someone out to act as Dharma Protector for their number one Chosen.

That person was a Dao Sovereign, a woman of extraordinary beauty. She sat on the Ninth Sect's Dao mountain, looking up into the sky with a look of surprise.

"This is a mere Immortal Tribulation, and yet the Vast Expanse sends Tribulation Lightning like this? It's almost as if there's a Heavenly Dao or a magical law of nature intent on preventing lightning that exceeds his cultivation base from descending. Were it not for that, the Vast Expanse would wipe him out in body and mind." The Dao Sovereign found it very strange, especially when she realized that she could sense... fluctuations of fear.

"Fear?" she thought, shaking her head and wondering if she was mistaken. "The Vast Expanse is boundless and majestic. Even if it really does have a will of its own, how could it fear a trifling Immortal Realm cultivator?" 1

The Immortal Tribulation lasted for three whole months before it faded away. During that entire time, Meng Hao's clone proudly closed his eyes and allowed himself to be bathed by the Tribulation Lightning.

He didn't fight back or resist it. He allowed the lightning to strike him. It was like a baptism in which he didn't move an inch. That, of course, led to widespread shock.

When the last bit of the Immortal Tribulation was about to fade away, Meng Hao's eyes suddenly opened, and he reached out, pointing his finger up at the Heavens.

He did not speak, but the gesture of pointing his finger caused colors to flash, and a gale-force wind to scream. The entire sky seemed to tremble,

and countless Tribulation Lightning bolts shattered, transforming into motes of light that drifted out. At this point, the Immortal Tribulation ended, and Meng Hao's clone began to emanate Immortal qi.

But then, the sky shook, and a red bolt of lightning suddenly formed, shooting down toward Fang Mu. It was backed by a shocking will, and unexpectedly radiated the might of the Dao Realm.

Even as the red bolt of lightning descended, a red cloud appeared up above, and red rain began to fall. It was a sight shocking to all, that caused even the female Dao Sovereign's face to fall.

"The blood of the Heavens! That means... the Dao of the Vast Expanse Society is violating its own magical laws, paying the highest price to eliminate this young man by sending Tribulation Lightning against him that exceeds the Immortal Realm!" The Dao Sovereign was just about to do something when, all of a sudden, the red bolt of lightning lurched to a halt about 300 meters away from Fang Mu's head. There it remained in midair, completely unmoving.

An incredible pressure suddenly filled the entire continent. At some point, a person had appeared in the air. It was a young man wearing a black robe, with long violet hair. As he floated there, he radiated a supremely domineering aura, as if he were the most important entity in existence!

Boundless coldness roiled off of him, and a red, Demonic glow could be seen in his eyes. On his forehead was a long violet mark that was apparently a closed third eye!

"Ninth Paragon!!" blurted the female Dao Sovereign. Trembling, she dropped to her knees to kowtow. In that same moment, countless cultivators in the vast area that made up the Ninth Sect, regardless of the levels of their cultivation base, dropped trembling to the ground.

"We offer respectful greetings, Ninth Paragon!"

"We offer respectful greetings, Ninth Paragon!!"

The sounds echoed out, causing everything to shake. To the cultivators

in the Ninth Sect, the Ninth Paragon was their lord, their spirit, and their leader, the most ultimate of monarchs.

This was none other than Meng Hao's true self!

As soon as he realized that there was something out of the ordinary with this bolt of Tribulation Lightning, he came as his true self. As soon as he appeared, he reached out and grabbed the bolt of red lightning, then crushed it in his hand.

A boom rang out as the lightning bolt shattered. The cloud layers up above roiled, and a faint roar of rage could be heard.

Meng Hao's true self looked up into the sky, eyes glowing red.

"Scram!" he said, flicking his sleeve. Then, a massive blast of energy exploded out as he flew up toward the clouds.

At the same time, his clone stood on the mountain, looking up into the sky, his eyes glowing without the slightest hint of red. They only contained pure, Immortal light.

The Heavens trembled, and the clouds ceased to seethe. In fact, they collapsed, and their redness faded away. The sky went dark, and outside of Planet Vast Expanse, boundless ripples spread out into the Vast Expanse for a long moment before everything finally went still.

Having accomplished these things, he prepared to vanish. But then, he looked out into the void and saw something far off in the distance that made him stop.

His glance caused the void to vibrate, as if someone were out there, reeling in shock. Suddenly, Han Bei stumbled out into the open, mixed emotions on her face, including shock as she looked at Meng Hao's true self, and his clone.

A tremor ran through her, and without the slightest hesitation, she began to back up. However, even as she did, Meng Hao reached out and made a grasping motion.

The entire world seemed to freeze in place as a tremendous power

rumbled out. Even as that power was about to sweep over Han Bei, fluctuations suddenly began to emanate out from her that Meng Hao recognized!

It was... the aura of Allheaven! The aura of a Demon!!

*

1. Since I'm sure some people are wondering, there are plenty of different words for fear, fright, being scared, terrified, etc. in Chinese. Here, the word is indeed the same word for "fear" as in "Allheaven fears the Immortal," which is a word that isn't used very often in the story.

Chapter 1452: Leverage!

The aura was obscure. In the moment that it exploded out, it transformed into a teleportation power which whisked Han Bei away, right out from Meng Hao's grasp.

When she reappeared, she was back in the First Sect of the Vast Expanse School, in her secluded meditation facilities. Blood immediately began to ooze out of her mouth, but it was without the slightest hesitation that she produced an ancient Feng Shui compass from her bag of holding, which she then placed onto the ground in front of her.

Ripples immediately began to spread out, filling the area and protecting her within their range.

Han Bei was shivering, her breath coming in rapid pants, her face covered with a look of disbelief.

Her mind had been thrown into chaos thanks to Meng Hao's sudden appearance. Earlier, she had felt the tug of memory after hearing the name Fang Mu, which was why she had gone to take a look. How could she ever have imagined what would result?

"Meng Hao, Fang Mu...." She took a deep breath, performing a double-handed incantation gesture to strengthen the power of the Feng Shui compass.

**

The way Han Bei had suddenly escaped was strange to say the least, and in fact, other than Meng Hao, no one on Planet Vast Expanse even noticed her.

Meng Hao's true self looked at the spot where she had disappeared, eyes glittering.

"Han Bei.... I can't believe she's here!" He couldn't help but think back to when he had seen her on the enormous God corpse. Then he recalled all her unusual behavior back on Planet South Heaven. Of course, a thorough analysis couldn't leave out the fact that his earliest dealings with her

stretched back to the Black Sieve Sect's Blessed Land!

That was where he had found the meat jelly, and also where the Lightning Cauldron came from. Furthermore, sealed inside that land had also been... the soul of Han Bei's ancestor! 1

Meng Hao's eyes shone with bright light. If he had seen Han Bei in this situation before going to the necropolis, his analysis of the situation would still have occupied him, but the conclusions he would have arrived at would be far different than the truth that presented itself now. After his visit to the necropolis, though, he had learned much about many things. Because of that, he knew that Han Bei's method of escape contained a bit of the aura of Allheaven, as well as some Demonic power. That left him completely convinced...

That Han Bei had something to do with Allheaven!

Cold light flickered in Meng Hao's eyes as he suddenly flickered into motion and vanished.

Meng Hao's clone was still on top of the mountain, looking up into the sky in the direction of where Han Bei had appeared. His eyes were narrowed, but after a moment they returned to normal.

Meanwhile, Han Bei was still ashen-faced after being teleported back from the Ninth Sect. Her heart was filled with an uneasy premonition, as if a great disaster were heading her way. Deep within her, a sensation of imminent crisis was building up.

People on Planet Vast Expanse believed her to be from what was known as an ancient cultivator clan. After joining the sect, the cultivation base power she revealed was that of the peak of the Immortal Realm.

However, after seeing Meng Hao and his clone, she felt something threatening looming behind her like a razor-sharp needle.

"What are you doing on Planet Vast Expanse? I can't believe... that you're the Ninth Paragon? How is that even possible!?" Han Bei's face was completely ashen. Her secluded meditation facilities were surrounded by countless restrictive spells, and yet that didn't leave her feeling safe at all.

During the clone's Tribulation, Meng Hao's true self had looked at her, and although his gaze was calm, it was filled with a brilliance that struck her heart with dread.

And in fact, to feel dread was the correct response. After all, it wasn't very long after she returned to her secluded meditation facilities that rumbling sounds filled the air outside.

The sounds were intense, but apparently, they were being restricted to a small area, making it impossible for anyone outside to hear. However, the area where Han Bei was located was shaking so hard that mountains were rocking back and forth, and buildings were collapsing. However, the Feng Shui compass shone with brilliant light, blocking that force. If not, she would have been immediately engulfed in the destructive power that was buckling the surrounding area.

Han Bei then looked up to see Meng Hao's true self standing there outside her secluded meditation facilities, prevented from entering by the Feng Shui compass shield.

He wore a black robe, and his expression was cold and icy. His hair floated in the wind, and a violet third eye could be seen on his forehead. Although it was closed, it still radiated majestic power.

"It's always nice to reunite with old friends," he said coolly. "Why are you so afraid of me, Han Bei?"

Han Bei shivered as she looked at Meng Hao, her expression filled with mixed emotions. She couldn't stop from shaking; she knew that her sudden appearance would be a big shock to Meng Hao, mainly because of the destruction of the Mountain and Sea Realm. Everyone else was back on the Mountain and Sea Butterfly, so why... was she here, having assumed the identity of a Holy Daughter-designate of the Vast Expanse School?

Han Bei took a deep breath and put a calm expression on her face. She was an adept schemer, but this turn of events had been too sudden, which caused her to panic. However, now her mind had settled down and she rose to her feet, eyes flickering. She gave Meng Hao a curtseying bow,

clasped hands and said, “Han Bei offers greetings, Ninth Paragon.”

Then she looked up calmly into Meng Hao’s eyes. “However, this is Junior’s first time meeting the exalted Paragon. When you say ‘old friends,’ what exactly is it that you mean?”

Meng Hao looked back at her, seemingly unfazed by her behavior. In fact, it corresponded exactly to the old Han Bei that he remembered. He suddenly smiled, although it was an icy cold smile.

Then his gaze came to rest on the ancient Feng Shui compass, upon which he could sense... the aura of Allheaven. 2

“I would never have been able to guess that you actually have something to do with Allheaven,” he said. He shook his head and flicked his sleeve. “Well, it doesn’t matter. Since you don’t want to admit it, then I presume you must have some leverage to rely on, right? I’m curious to see what it is. By the way... as long as you’re on Planet Vast Expanse, it doesn’t matter what identity you assume, finding you would be as easy as flipping over my hand.” With that, he paid her no more heed, vanishing back to Ninth Paragon City.

His purpose in coming had been to confirm his suspicions. After laying eyes on the Feng Shui compass, he was now absolutely certain and didn’t need any further confirmation.

After Meng Hao left, Han Bei virtually collapsed, gasping for breath. After a long moment, she gritted her teeth.

“Thankfully I prepared that life-saving backup plan all those years ago. It seems that now... is the time to enact that plan.” With that, she reached up and gently tapped her forehead. Her forehead then split apart, revealing a swath of pitch blackness, within which floated... a soul!

It was not Han Bei’s soul, but closer inspection revealed that it was indeed a woman. Her eyes were closed, as if she were sleeping, but if Meng Hao were here, he would recognize her in an instant. Unexpectedly, it was the soul of... Chu Yuyan!

Years ago, when Chu Yuyan withered away into death, her soul

dispersed. Meng Hao fought his way into the Eighth Mountain and Sea to search for her, but the only thing he ever found was a tiny sliver of her soul.

Back then, the clues had seemed to indicate that the rest of Chu Yuyan's soul had vanished into the starry sky. He thought that the problem was that he couldn't find it, but the truth was that Han Bei had secretly interfered and captured the soul. From then on, it became a life-saving measure for future use.

In order to ensure that Chu Yuyan's soul didn't fade away into complete death, Han Bei had merged some of her own life soul into it, creating a sort of symbiotic state of existence between them.

After many years of feeding Chu Yuyan's soul in such a way, it had become thoroughly intertwined with Han Bei's. Only someone with the power of Transcendence could ever separate them. That meant that if Han Bei died, Chu Yuyan's soul would well and truly disperse.

Han Bei sat there silently, mixed emotions on her face. She thought back to everything which had occurred between her and Meng Hao, and sighed softly. Finally, she gritted her teeth.

"We have different standpoints, and different missions. You want to see what my leverage is, well I'll show you." She waved her hand, sending Chu Yuyan's soul flying out, where it vanished into Heaven and Earth.

In the moment that the soul flew out, Meng Hao's true self locked onto it with divine sense. After realizing who it was, a tremor ran through him, and he felt as if countless lightning bolts were striking his mind.

His eyes suddenly snapped shut, and a powerful force like a windstorm raged up from him. It swept out to cover all of Ninth Paragon City, then the entire half-planet, then all of its starry sky, and then the lands up above on Planet Vast Expanse. Soon, all of Planet Vast Expanse was shaking violently.

The other Paragons were shocked. The Sect Leader opened his eyes and looked out in astonishment. Of course, Jin Yunshan and Sha Jiudong and the others were equally stunned by Meng Hao's unleashing of energy.

“What is that psycho doing?!” Jin Yunshan thought, shivering. He quickly unleashed his cultivation base defensively, worried that Meng Hao was in a bad mood and might be looking to start a fight.

Han Bei was also trembling inwardly, and yet, continued to smile as calmly as ever.

“As long as you care, that’s enough,” she murmured to herself.

The tempest lasted for only a moment before it vanished. Back in Ninth Paragon City, Meng Hao rose to his feet, eyes filled with reminiscence, grief, and other mixed emotions as he looked at the soul using his divine sense.

“Chu Yuyan....” he murmured hoarsely. He followed her with his divine sense as she flew into the ninth continent, into the mortal world. She eventually entered the womb of a woman... as she began the cycle of reincarnation, to become a person once again.

After a long moment, Meng Hao retracted his divine sense. How could he not have noticed that Chu Yuyan’s soul was intermixed with some of Han Bei’s life soul? Although Chu Yuyan was independent, they existed symbiotically.

“Well that... is some good leverage.” He finally closed his eyes, almost as if he had forgotten about Han Bei.

Time passed. The Immortal Tribulation of Meng Hao’s clone rocked all of the Vast Expanse School. Even the other Paragons of similar rank to Meng Hao had taken note.

From that day on, the name Fang Mu became well-known in the Vast Expanse School. In ten years, he went from mortal to Immortal. He shook the Ninth Sect, rocked the Vast Expanse School, and word about him even spread throughout Planet Vast Expanse.

Everyone learned that an incredible Chosen had appeared in the Ninth Sect!

At the same time, many disciples of the Vast Expanse School began to pay close attention to Meng Hao’s clone. That was especially true of the

blazing suns among the Chosen, who came to view him as a formidable opponent.

However, some of the Chosen disdained him, being of the belief that in terms of cultivation base, they were far beyond him.

“Who cares if you reach Immortal Ascension in ten years? Don’t tell me he’s going to reach the Ancient Realm in ten years too?” Talk like that became the norm.

“He’s a trifling Immortal Realm member of the Junior generation, that’s all. He might have nice latent talent, but so what?! All nine sects of the Vast Expanse School have a Vast Expanse Shrine, and only by getting your name listed there are you truly a Chosen!”

“After the Vast Expanse Shrine is the Transcendence Path. Only those who walk the Transcendence Path are the true blazing suns. Other than the Ninth Paragon, which Paragon is there who hasn’t left their footprint there!?”

“The path of cultivation is a long one. Rising up too quickly is a bad thing. This kid isn’t that smart, is he? He’ll definitely pay some painful consequences later.”

*

1. Here are some links to the major events mentioned regarding Han Bei, as well as a few others. Meng Hao actually met Han Bei in the Black Sieve Sect [chapter 143](#). In the Blessed Land, she led an expedition into the cauldron which started in [chapter 155](#). It was in that arc that Meng Hao met and later “acquired” the meat jelly. Han Bei released and merged with her ancestor in [chapter 163](#). She had a very odd conversation with Meng Hao in [chapter 247](#). In [chapter 734](#), it’s mentioned that she went missing after returning from the Ancient Demon Immortal Sect. Meng Hao went back to get the Lightning Cauldron in [chapter 751](#). And finally, Meng Hao saw her on the corpse at the bottom of the Ninth Sea in [chapter 1082](#). Those are just a few

key chapters, she appeared in other many parts of the story such as the Song Clan search for a son-in-law and the Ancient Demon Immortal Sect arc.

2. Something that jumps out is that the words 'Feng Shui compass' and 'Allheaven' share a character, which is the character "Luo," the one that basically means 'net'. So Allheaven is literally the "luo heaven" and a Feng Shui compass is a "luo disc." The Black Sieve Sect, of which Han Bei was originally a member, would be the "black luo sect." That doesn't necessarily mean there is a connection between them all.

Chapter 1453: Enjoy Yourself, Prince!

Few people knew exactly how many Immortal meridians Meng Hao's clone opened after his Immortal Tribulation. He didn't go on to make a big show of things, but instead, went back into secluded meditation to practice cultivation.

However, his heart was very unsettled because of the matter of Chu Yuyan.

"Han Bei planned things out years and years in advance. She fused her own life soul with Chu Yuyan, creating a symbiosis.... Excellent leverage." After a long moment, he sighed.

It took three days for him to settle his mind and heart. Afterward, he left for a time, and when he returned, he had the mastiff with him. Then, both of them went into meditative trances, continuing their cultivation in seclusion.

Time passed. Another ten years went by in the blink of an eye. During that time, Meng Hao's clone didn't leave the Ninth Sect. He stayed confined in meditation.

Because he stayed out of the public eye, no one knew the level of his cultivation base, or his progress. After the ten years passed, no Tribulation Lightning descended, so people stopped worrying about whether or not he was Chosen, and in fact many people even forgot about him. Those who did remember him did so with scorn.

He had no friends, nor any dealings with anyone. He remained in his subdivision of the Ninth Sect, focused completely on cultivation. To remain completely separated from the sect was an uncommon thing. Only people with a special status could do something like that. After all, Fang Mu was nothing more than an Inner Sect disciple.

However... the Ninth Sect belonged to Meng Hao. All it took was a single word from his true self to that one particular Dao Sovereign, indicating that Fang Mu was important and wasn't to be disturbed, and the matter was handled.

Because of that, no one bothered his clone during those ten years. The only company he had was the mastiff.

Actually, Meng Hao's true self spent those ten years in much the same way. He focused completely on gaining full enlightenment of all his Hexing Essences. With such a deep focus only on cultivation, his twenty years of work left him significantly more powerful than when he had entered the necropolis.

Preparations for the second trip into the necropolis were still being made by the Sect Leader. Apparently, he wanted to be completely and utterly prepared. Obviously, he was completely intent on reaching the second land mass in this trip.

During the ten years, news spread that Han Bei had broken through from the Immortal Realm. Now that she was in the Ancient Realm, she was no longer a Holy Daughter-designate. Somehow, she manipulated her way into becoming one of the Vast Expanse School's nine Holy Daughters.

The Sect Leader, despite being wrapped up in preparations for the necropolis, found time to provide some assistance and advice to Han Bei, who was very important to him.

As for exactly what went on, Meng Hao didn't pay close attention.

Another year passed, whereupon Meng Hao's clone emerged from secluded meditation and left the Ninth Sect. No one interfered with him; most people only had a vague impression of who he was.

Both he and the mastiff transformed into beams of light that shot off into the distance. A few days later, they appeared in a small town in the mortal world.

It wasn't very large, but it was a bustling place. The streets were packed with people who scurried about doing all sorts of things. Meng Hao walked slowly through the town, wearing a green robe and looking every bit the scholar. Eventually, he came to a stop in front of the house of an average family.

A warm look could be seen in his eyes as he looked at a group of

youngsters playing outside the main gate. One of them was an eleven-year-old girl, who wore a shy smile on her face as she played with her companions.

His gaze seemed to stretch back hundreds of years into the past, recalling numerous events which had occurred once upon a time. It was currently autumn, and a crisp wind sent fallen leaves tumbling down the street. The setting sun was deep red color, filling the world with its warmth, and casting Meng Hao's shadow long and far across the ground....

The girl suddenly sensed that she was being watched, and she looked up at Meng Hao. She seemed a bit scared, and quickly averted her eyes. A moment passed, and he was still looking at her, making her even more frightened. She whispered something to her friends, then ran back into her house.

Meng Hao laughed spontaneously, then took a deep breath, his eyes gleaming with reminiscence.

"In your last life, I owed you...." he said softly. "In this life, I'll pay that debt." Straightening his clothes, he walked up to the house and knocked on the gate. After a long moment, the gate opened, and he entered.

There was no need for complicated formalities. On Planet Vast Expanse, even mortals were aware of the existence of Immortal beings, and treated them with the utmost respect and veneration.

Meng Hao mentioned that he wished to take this girl, whose name was Yan'er, as an apprentice. He demonstrated some magical techniques to the girl's parents, who didn't hesitate for even a moment to give their assent. They looked very excited.

A few days later, Meng Hao left, followed by a sad-looking girl, and the mastiff.

After a while, she couldn't hold back from asking, "Master... you... you really aren't a fraud?"

In response to her question, Meng Hao bopped her on the top of her head with his palm. It hurt a little, but before she could say anything, her

body was suddenly lifted up into the air. Wind blasted into her face, and when she looked down, she saw vast lands stretching out in all directions. Everything grew smaller and smaller, and her eyes grew wider and wider.

After some time passed, she saw a boundless stretch of mountains, covered by countless buildings and structures. It was none other than... the Ninth Sect.

Suddenly, Meng Hao's soft voice could be heard in her ears, "From now on, you are the apprentice of Fang Mu. The one and only apprentice."

From that day on, a girl lived in Fang Mu's secluded meditation facilities in his subdivision of the Ninth Sect. With her there, things were no longer so peaceful and quiet.

She was naturally gifted when it came to cultivation, but most of that seemed focused on alchemy. Meng Hao also spent time teaching her other cultivation methods, as well as some of his own alchemy techniques.

The girl's personality was very different from Meng Hao's. She enjoyed exploring the Ninth Sect, and liked making friends. Soon, just about everyone in the subdivision knew that the Fang Mu, who had put on such a spectacular display about ten years ago, had taken on an apprentice.

Seven years passed. By now, it had been eighteen years since Fang Mu's Immortal Tribulation, and it was also the year that his apprentice Yan'er turned eighteen.

She was a slender and elegant teenager. As she matured, she became more and more beautiful, and soon began to distinguish herself among the other female disciples of the sect. Because of her natural gift for cultivation, especially when it came to alchemy, she was already in late Foundation Establishment, just half a step away from Core Formation.

Her Dao of alchemy was boundless and profound, enough to shake even some of the Elders of the subdivision.

Because of all of that, quite a few male disciples began to pursue the young Yan'er. Of course, her personality was a bit more like a boy's; she was definitely not the graceful and subdued type. The only time she would

pout and act like a girl was in front of Meng Hao.

“Master, can I go, please? I’ve... I’ve been waiting for this day forever!

“Master, look, don’t worry. Nothing’s going to happen. Lots of my Elder Brothers and Sisters from the sect are going to be there. We’ll all be going together.”

Yan’er was currently standing in front of Meng Hao making a request. She started out begging, but in the end, when he simply sat there in meditation, ignoring her, she started to get a bit irritated. “Aiya! You old fogey! Are you gonna let me go or not!?”

“How impudent!” Meng Hao said, opening his eyes to glare at her. Yan’er had become somewhat of a headache in recent years. In the beginning, she had treated him with awe and reverence. But that attitude had slowly faded away until it was now gone.

Yan’er was clearly not afraid of her Master’s glare. Smiling broadly, she hurried over and started to massage his shoulders. Eyes wide, she quietly began to plead again, in a very sweet and fawning voice.

“Master, everybody’s saying that it’s not just people from our subdivision who will be going to the bazaar. The whole sect will be there. In fact, people from the other continents will be coming too. The Vast Expanse School’s First Sect, Second Sect, I mean, basically all of the nine sects are going to be there.

“It’s going to be so exciting! Elder Brother Bi Yun is also going.... I heard that his name is in the top 100 of the Vast Expanse Shrine....” When Yan’er mentioned Elder Brother Bi Yun, her eyes suddenly grew very bright.

Meng Hao frowned, then sighed, aware that the reason his apprentice wanted to go to the bazaar was not merely the simple task of buying medicinal plants. Like most female disciples, she viewed the Chosen members of the sect with awe. Bi Yun, who was one of the blazing suns of the Ninth Sect, was a good example.

Unable to deal with her coaxing and prodding, he finally nodded and

said, "Fine, fine, go ahead."

Yan'er was immediately delighted, and even leaned forward and hugged him. Seeing her so delighted, Meng Hao's gaze softened a bit, and he thought about Chu Yuyan.

In his last life, he had owed Chu Yuyan a debt of emotion. Unfortunately, in this life, his heart was already dead, and all he could give her was the relationship of a Master and apprentice.

Yan'er left. The next day at dawn, she was in very high spirits as she met up with some of the other disciples of the subdivision, after which they all left together toward the grand bazaar which was held every few years on the ninth continent.

Meng Hao stayed in secluded meditation. His cultivation base was at a critical juncture, and he could make a breakthrough into the Ancient Realm at almost any time. Although he had remained in the Immortal Realm for quite some time, causing many people to forget about him, the reason was because of something that no one but him was aware of. When he had opened his Immortal meridians, he actually exceeded the number previously reached by his true self, placing him at a terrifying level that nobody had ever reached before, not even in ancient times.

That was why his progress in the Immortal Realm had been so slow.

"Because of my successive breakthroughs, the Ninth Hex is getting closer to completion. However, why is it that what I used to believe was perfect in the past, now seems somewhat incomplete...?" Frowning, he proceeded with his cultivation.

Even as he was focusing on cultivation, Yan'er and her Elder Brothers and Sisters had left the Ninth Sect and run into a group of disciples from the Eighth Sect.

There were a dozen or so of them, all in the Immortal Realm. One of them was a handsome young man wearing very extravagant clothing. His friends clustered around him, and yet, within his eyes could be seen a licentious gleam. He seemed like nothing more than a carefree young man, but the truth was that he had a unique position within the Eighth

Sect. That was especially evident considering that he was being shadowed by a middle-aged cultivator who was obviously his Dao Protector. The man made it seem as if his cultivation base were in the Immortal Realm, but he was actually a powerful Dao Realm expert.

Almost as soon as the two groups met, the young man took note of Yan'er, and his eyes shone with both excitement and nefariousness.

“What a wonderful looking cultivation vessel....” he said, grinning. His Dao Protector also smiled. He was well aware of the proclivities of this young Prince of his clan. Furthermore, the young man had a very high and important standing within the Eighth Sect, and even within the Vast Expanse School as a whole, there were few people who could compare. However, the Dao Protector was also careful; whenever the Prince took a liking to a girl, he would always check her background. If he discovered any girl who had connections in the sect, he would advise the young man to abandon any pursuit. However, when it came to ordinary disciples, there were plenty of ways to make sure that no problems resulted. 1

The Dao Protector pulled out a jade slip, examined it for a moment, then relaxed.

“Her background is known, and she has no connections,” he said. “She joined the sect a few years ago as the apprentice of someone named Fang Mu. Fang Mu went from being mortal to Immortal in only ten years, and made somewhat of a stir at that time. However, even he doesn't have any connections. He's a small-time figure, nothing more than an Inner Sect disciple from a subdivision of the Ninth Sect.

“Enjoy yourself, Prince!”

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1. The term “cultivation vessel” came up before with the original Ninth Paragon. It's a term from real Daoist sexual cultivation practices.

Chapter 1454: You Screwed Us Over....

In response to the Dao Protector's words, a radiant smile broke out on the young man's face. As the grandson of Patriarch Chi Feng of the Eighth Sect, he had free reign to do anything he wished in his sect.

After the Eighth Sect's 9-Essences Paragon perished, Patriarch Chi Feng had returned from the excursion to the necropolis and worked hard at cultivation until he was on the verge of a breakthrough. He was the most powerful expert in the Eighth Sect, and if he broke through to the 9-Essences level, he would become the official leader of the Eighth Sect, and would also become one of the nine great Paragons of the Vast Expanse School.

People like that were truly at the pinnacle of the Vast Expanse School, and that was one of the reasons why this young man could have his pick of almost any female cultivator he wanted to use as a cultivation vessel.

Of course, he was very careful. If a girl had connections or a powerful background, then he would give up any notions of even so much as touching her. Because of that, Patriarch Chi Feng, despite being aware of the situation, felt that the young man was still relatively dependable, and wouldn't do something that made him a liability.

Smiling in response to the Dao Protector's words, the young man said, "Well, there's no hurry. A cultivation vessel like that is a rare thing in the Eighth Sect nowadays. Who would have thought that I would get something so wonderful here? Excellent, excellent.

"Unfortunately, we're still in the Ninth Sect, and the Patriarch reminded me before that I can't act presumptuously here....

"Ah well, it doesn't matter. I'll just figure out a way to get this cultivation vessel back to the Eighth Sect." The licentious gleam once again flickered in his eyes.

Over the following few days, Yan'er and her companions traveled with the group from the Eighth Sect. They came to realize what a high position the young man held, and treated him with the utmost respect. Eventually,

they reached the location of the bazaar, and arranged for their accommodations. On the night of the first day, Yan'er was filled with excitement and anticipation for the following days. Just as she was about to slip into a trance to do some meditation, a vortex suddenly sprang up around her. It happened without any sound or warning, and before Yan'er was even aware of what had happened, it was on the verge of swallowing her up.

In that moment, a howl rose up in the air outside of the bazaar. It was none other than the mastiff, who Meng Hao had arranged to secretly guard Yan'er on her trip.

The mastiff's eyes flickered with killing intent as it transformed into a beam of red light that flew into the air at high speed.

At the same time, in a valley about 500 kilometers outside of the bazaar, Patriarch Chi Feng's grandson was standing there looking at a vortex spinning in front of him. His Dao Protector, the middle-aged cultivator in the Dao Realm, stepped out holding an unconscious girl, who was none other than Yan'er.

When the young man saw Yan'er, he smiled and reached out to grab her, the carnal gleam in his eyes growing stronger.

The Dao Protector's expression softened. This sort of thing was a simple matter for him, and something he had done on numerous occasions. He cleared his throat, and was just about to say something, when a sudden howl ripped through the valley.

The abruptness of the sound caused the Dao Protector's face to fall. Even as he turned, a red streak of light shot toward him.

Rumbling sounds echoed out, and the entire valley began to collapse. The Dao Protector coughed up a mouthful of blood as he was sent tumbling off into the distance, seriously injured. An expression of astonishment filled his face at the sight of the large crimson dog which had just appeared.

"Th-that's... a Dao Realm beast!!

“Dammit, how could there be a Dao Realm beast here!?!?” The young man was so terrified he was shaking. Grabbing Yan’er, he shot backward. By this point, she had regained consciousness, and it took only a moment for her confusion to fade, whereupon she began to scream.

“Shut up!” the young man bellowed. Even as the words left his mouth, the mastiff’s eyes blazed with killing intent, and it began to speed in his direction.

“It’s... it’s after the girl!” The Dao Protector was shaken. How could he ever have imagined that grabbing a young girl in the Foundation Establishment stage would attract the attention of a Dao Realm beast?

“Prince, get out of here. Something’s off here! Something’s not right!” The Dao Protector had no time to think about the matter. However, he could tell that there was something very strange about what was happening. Almost as soon as the words left his mouth, the young man pulled out a jade pendant that had been hanging around his neck, and crushed it.

Instantly, a powerful teleportation force erupted out. However, it didn’t seem fast enough to get him away from the dog. The young man’s eyes suddenly flared with a vicious gleam. He might seem like a carefree young man, but he wasn’t stupid. His hand clamped around Yan’er’s neck, and he glared at the mastiff.

“If you take one more step, I’ll kill her!” he screamed. The mastiff stopped in place, and in that moment, the power of teleportation exploded out. The young man and Yan’er vanished in the blink of an eye. In that same instant, the mastiff howled and unleashed an attack, causing a huge crater to appear in the spot where the young man had just been standing.

The Dao Protector’s scalp was tingling, but it was without any hesitation that he sped backward. His mind was in complete chaos; this Dao Realm beast had obviously been tamed, and anyone who could tame a Dao Realm beast would clearly have an incredible cultivation base.

Seeing Yan’er disappear caused the mastiff to throw its head back and let out an astonishing roar. It erupted with energy as its body grew larger,

and it transformed into a beam of blood-colored light which sped toward the middle-aged Dao Protector. Before the man could even react, the mastiff chewed him up and swallowed him down.

Only a bloodcurdling scream lingered behind. Even in the last moment before his death, he couldn't fathom how a little Foundation Establishment cultivator could have caused such a disaster.

Of course, he had no way to know that the catastrophe resulting from what he and the young man had done, was only the beginning. As for the person he thought was a nobody in the sect, a trifling Inner Sect disciple named Fang Mu, even in death, he would never be able to guess his true identity.

As Yan'er faded away, the mastiff howled.

Deep within Planet Vast Expanse, on the half-planet, was Ninth Paragon City.

There, Meng Hao's true self suddenly opened his eyes, and they shone with unprecedented coldness. Dragons usually have one weak scale on their bodies. People likewise have weak spots. For Meng Hao, it was the Mountain and Sea Realm, his family, and his friends. Originally, he had no such weakness now that he was living on Planet Vast Expanse.

But when Chu Yuyan appeared, Meng Hao knew... that she was his weak spot!

Anyone who touched her was prodding the most sensitive part of Meng Hao!

Touching that weak spot would provoke wrath that could shake Heaven and Earth, and even the Vast Expanse!

The clouds in the sky above Planet Vast Expanse were churning. Lightning crackled, and strange colors flashed in the sky. The wind screamed, and countless individuals on the surface of the planet looked up in shock.

At the same time, all of Ninth Paragon City, all of the half-planet, all of the inner starry sky, and all of Planet Vast Expanse itself filled with

rumbling sounds.

This was the second time that such a thing had happened, the first being when Meng Hao had initially caught sight of Chu Yuyan's soul. Now... for the second time, a towering murderous aura erupted out, causing everyone on Planet Vast Expanse, even the Paragons, to be shaken inwardly.

Jin Yunshan, Sha Jiudong, and the Sect Leader were all in shock as they saw Meng Hao's true self step out into the open.

"That murderous aura," said Jin Yunshan with a gasp. "He's... he's going to kill someone!!" After sensing Meng Hao's aura, his eyes filled with vigilance.

Sha Jiudong had the same reaction, and as for the Sect Leader, he immediately left his meditation facilities. Other Paragons, both 8-Essences and 9-Essences, were all shaken.

Patriarch Chi Feng in the Eighth Sect was equally shaken. When he detected Meng Hao's aura, he thought about how he had mercilessly cut down the Eighth Paragon years ago in the necropolis.

"I wonder what unlucky fellow managed to provoke that jinx...." he murmured. Then he paid the matter no more heed, and closed his eyes in meditation.

Meanwhile, on the eighth continent, in the Eighth Sect, teleportation light twinkled. Patriarch Chi Feng's grandson, the young man, emerged with Yan'er. His face was pale, and he looked as if he had been roughed up, but his eyes glittered with viciousness.

"Dammit. Dammit!" he roared. "Who is it that dares to provoke me, the Prince!?!?"

"That was some trifling Dao Realm beast, nothing more. I'm gonna kill it. I'm gonna... I'm gonna eat it!

"I don't care who owns it. Anybody that provokes me will have their whole clan wiped out!!" He looked down at Yan'er, whose face was ashen and filled with terror.

“W-what... what are you going to do to me?” she stammered. “My Master won’t let you get away with this. He–”

“Shut up! Who’s your master? Fang Mu? A measly Inner Sect disciple? He’s a nobody that doesn’t even qualify to shine my shoes!” With that, the young man lifted his hand up and slapped Yan’er right across the face. Her cheek instantly swelled up, and blood oozed out of the corners of her mouth. She began to tremble, and a look of complete terror could be seen on her face.

Her entire life had been one free from care or worry, so what was happening now made her realize how fragile life really was. She felt helpless, as though she were about to be completely consumed by terror.

“Master... Master....” She began to weep in fear. She wanted to see her family, her Master, but instead, everything around her was strange. She wasn’t sure what was going to happen to her, and it left her shaking in fear.

The young man’s expression was cruel as he threw his head back and roared, “Men, come!!

“Someone’s trying to kill me! Patriarch, save me!!” As the boy’s words echoed out, the Eighth Sect was thrown into an uproar. Countless figures emerged, and when they saw Yan’er, they frowned, but didn’t say anything.

“Someone’s trying to kill me!!” he bellowed.

The young man’s shouting provoked a response, not from Chi Feng, but from a Dao Sovereign who flew out from within the Eighth Sect. “Who’s trying to kill you? I thought you just went to the ninth continent?”

As soon as he appeared, everyone clasped hands respectfully.

“Dad, I was on the ninth continent when I took a liking to this cultivation vessel. Then a Dao Realm beast... tried to kill me! It really tried to kill me!” Considering his quavering voice, and the way his clothes were ripped and torn, it was obvious that he had been fleeing for his life, and had used the teleportation device given him by the Patriarch.

Chapter 1455: The Ninth Paragon Arrives!

The Dao Sovereign frowned, looking over at the bruises on the young man's neck, which were clearly caused by the anxious way he had ripped the jade pendant off his neck.

He was the son of Patriarch Chi Feng, and had a cultivation base at the 6-Essences Dao Sovereign level. In the Vast Expanse School, he was at the peak of power when it came to people under the Paragon level. Normally speaking, he was the kind of person who would kill with decisiveness. Couple that with the fact that his father was likely to become the next Eighth Paragon, and it ensured that his status was constantly on the rise, and his cultivation experienced constant progress.

People in the Eighth Sect had even begun to refer to the father and son team as collective Paragon. Although the young grandson had never earned much respect, he was of the same bloodline. Therefore, if his Dao Sovereign father wished to punish him, or even kill him, no one would say anything. However, if someone struck his son with a blow, it was the same thing as striking him, or even Patriarch Chi Feng.

That was especially the case considering that Patriarch Chi Feng had reached a critical juncture in his cultivation. To the Dao Sovereign, the fact that someone had done something like this to his son was a likely indication that a competing force was trying to make a move, although with what goal, he wasn't sure.

However, he didn't need to be sure.

"It doesn't matter who did this, whoever dared to provoke my bloodline will be exterminated!" The Dao Sovereign snorted coldly and waved his sleeve. His murderous aura surged, rippling out into the area, causing the hearts of the nearby cultivators of the Eighth Sect to grow cold with fear. They were all well-aware that the bloodline of Patriarch Chi Feng were now preparing to go on a killing spree.

"What a pity. A Dao Realm beast, huh...? This girl must have some connections in her sect. But unfortunately for her, in the Vast Expanse

School, power and influence are what really matter.

“It would be easier to find a phoenix feather or a qilin horn than to find someone on Planet Vast Expanse who could compare to Patriarch Chi Feng...” Those were the thoughts running through the heads of most of the people present, and there were some who even began to radiate their own killing intent, indicating that they wished to join the Dao Sovereign in whatever action he was about to take.

The Dao Sovereign seemed pleased with this. Glaring over at the young man, he said, “What are you standing around for? Take me to see whoever it was that had the gall to send a beast like that to harm a disciple of my Vast Expanse School!”

As for Yan’er, he didn’t even bother to look at her. He was aware of his son’s vices, and although they caused him a bit of a headache sometimes, he had the same attitude as Patriarch Chi Feng. In his view, the young man was always careful, and to cultivators, being careful was the same as being dependable.

Considering the girl had a Dao Realm beast protecting her, she clearly had some connections in the sect. But to Chi Feng, such connections weren’t even worth paying attention to.

All the other cultivators in the crowd felt the same as the Dao Sovereign, that it really would be easier to find a phoenix feather or a qilin horn than to find someone who could strike fear into the hearts of the members of this bloodline.

The Dao Sovereign simply couldn’t believe that in his son’s journey outside of the sect, he could possibly have provoked one of those existences that they did not dare to provoke.

Even as he spoke, the Dao Sovereign’s energy rose up, causing everything else in the area to shake.

The young man’s eyes went wide with delight. In his entire life, he had never been more scared than he had been earlier that day. He had been so close to dying that he had almost collapsed mentally.

Laughing heartily, he looked over at the terrified Yan'er, eyes flickering with a depraved gleam.

“Hey gorgeous, you know that dog of yours? I’m going to boil him right in front of you and then eat him. Don’t worry, I’ll give you a few bites to try.”

Shaking, Yan'er bit her lip. By this point, her heart was completely overwhelmed with terror and fear. She felt alone, helpless and hopeless, and she suddenly missed her Master more than ever.

“Master...” she whimpered, shivering. “Master...”

“Did you just say something about your Master? Hahaha! I don’t care what your Master has to do with your pet. He dared to provoke me, he WILL die. And before he dies, I’ll make him act like a dog!” Viciousness gleamed in the young man’s eyes as his laughter rang out into the air. He was just about to lead the group off when suddenly a cold snort ripped through the killing intent of the surrounding group of cultivators. It was like a clap of thunder that caused everything to tremble on the verge of exploding.

Lands quaked, and floor tiles were transformed into ash. A tempest sprang up that instantly spread out to cover the entire Eighth Sect.

The Eighth Sect was huge, but even if it were larger than it was, the tempest would still fill it. At the same time, it was as if an enormous, invisible foot had stamped down onto the ground. A huge shockwave spread out, filling the Eighth Sect, causing all mountains, buildings, and lands to shake violently.

In addition to the physical effects on the surroundings, all cultivators in the Eighth Sect, regardless of the level of their cultivation base or what they were doing at the moment... began to tremble. It was as if mountains were crushing down onto them, causing blood to spray out of their mouths. To their astonishment, they suddenly realized that... they couldn’t move a muscle.

A roar of rage filled the world with indescribable pressure, crushing down onto the entire Eighth Sect!

All cultivators were completely and utterly shocked. Their hearts filled with terror, and their minds spun. Then, off in the distance, a person approached... it was a young man in a black robe, with violet hair, who seemed to carry with him all the darkness and coldness in the world.

Behind him, the Heavens trembled as if they were about to shatter. His gaze caused the air to distort, as if it were making a path for him, and beneath him, the lands shook as if they were kowtowing in worship!

One person suppressed Heaven and shook the Earth. Everything twisted and distorted. This young man became the center of all attention... a figure who would stand for all eternity!

Even as he appeared, a cold voice echoed out that seemed to carry infinite rage and killing intent. It echoed like a thousand thunders, shaking everything. "Who dared to harm one of the disciples of my Ninth Sect?"

His voice caused countless mountains to crumble, and numerous buildings to fall. The cultivators of the Eighth Sect once again coughed up mouthfuls of blood.

When an ordinary man is enraged, blood can be spattered everywhere. When a Paragon is enraged, Heaven and Earth weep!

These people from the Eighth Sect had poked Meng Hao in his sensitive weak spot, enraging him. And when Meng Hao was enraged, instead of saying that Heaven and Earth were weeping, it would be better to say that the Vast Expanse was being buried!

As soon as the voice rang out, colors flashed and the wind screamed. Mountains collapsed and buildings toppled. The cultivation bases of all cultivators in the Eighth Sect became unstable, and blood oozed out of their eyes, ears, noses, and mouths.

"Ninth.... Ninth P-P... Ninth Paragon!!" The young man's father, the Dao Sovereign, couldn't stop his eyes from bulging in disbelief. Blood sprayed out of his mouth, and although he couldn't actually move, he was trembling, all the way down to his very soul.

All of that was because of... a single sentence!

It was as if Meng Hao represented the might of Heaven, and his word was Heavenly Dao and magical law alike!

The sky above the eighth continent went dark, and the cultivators of the Eighth Sect, including their Paragons, were all trembling. Patriarch Chi Feng was also shaking, and when he looked out from his secluded meditation chamber, an expression of disbelief washed over his face as he realized he was looking at that most terrifying of figures, the person who struck fear into his heart more than anything after the trip to the necropolis.

“The Ninth Paragon.... What... what is he doing here? Dammit, who provoked a terrifying jinx like that!?!?!” Patriarch Chi Feng’s eyes were already bloodshot.

Everyone was trembling, except for Yan’er. She looked up, and through the tears streaming down her face, she could see someone approaching. Although she couldn’t make out his features clearly, he seemed familiar, and she couldn’t hold back from saying, “Master....”

As soon as the words left her mouth, all the cultivators in the area, including the young man and the Dao Sovereign, gasped as if they had been struck by lightning.

That was especially true of the young man. He sagged in place as though his bones had turned to mush. His mind reeled as the word she had just uttered echoed out.

“The vessel I took a liking to is... the apprentice of the Ninth Paragon?” The young man suddenly wanted to laugh. It was almost like he was hearing the funniest joke he had ever heard in his entire life. And yet, at the bottom of his heart, he was trembling with insanity.

As his mind reeled, his entire world was destroyed; the light left it, leaving nothing but darkness.

He wasn’t the only one to have such a reaction. His father, the Dao Sovereign, was normally a high and mighty figure. Within the Eighth Sect,

innumerable people treated him with fear and dignity. But now, in front of Meng Hao, he was trembling like a stray dog. He was gasping for breath, staring in shock, his eyes bloodshot as he turned to look at his son. If he could kill anyone at this moment, he would most definitely... tear this unfilial son to shreds!

“You damned son of a bitch!” he bellowed. “Y-y-you... you screwed us all over!!”

Everyone in the crowd was shaking, especially the ones who had expressed their desire to join Chi Feng’s bloodline in wiping out the enemy. Looks of shock and disbelief appeared on their faces, and suddenly they felt a bit bad for Chi Feng’s bloodline.

Apparently... they had the audacious gall and courage to dare to provoke one of the nine great Paragons of the Vast Expanse School.

Everything was deathly silent, as people stood there in fear.

Meng Hao’s true self walked into the Eighth Sect, past the crowds of people, until he was standing in front of Yan’er. As soon as his gaze came to rest on her, his eyes turned soft and warm.

“I’m not your Master,” he said slowly. “But... any cultivator in the Ninth Sect could be considered my apprentice.”

Everyone present breathed a sigh of relief, especially the Dao Sovereign. As long as they weren’t really Master and apprentice, then everything should be fine....

Yan’er looked at Meng Hao, and although he didn’t look exactly like her Master, for some reason he seemed very familiar. The warmth in his words, and everything else, filled her with the intense sensation that she really was standing in front of her Master.

That feeling of familiarity caused tears to stream down her cheeks. She rushed forward and wrapped her arms around his chest, wailing. It was as if her tears could release all of the humiliation, fear, and terror that she had just experienced.

The Eighth Sect was completely silent. Everyone stood there trembling,

looking at that most powerful of entities gently holding a young girl in his arms. When Meng Hao looked up again, his eyes were so ice cold that they seemed capable of extinguishing the light of the sun and moon.

As Yan'er wept in his arms, everyone looked on, shaking. Then, within the silence that filled the Eighth Sect, Meng Hao looked down at Yan'er's cheek.

There... was a distinct hand print!

Chapter 1456: Who Else?

It was the swollen mark left behind by a vicious slap to the face. When Meng Hao saw it there on Yan'er's face, he said nothing. However, the coldness radiating off of his body grew with explosive intensity, filling the entire area. It was as if Heaven and Earth were furious, as if the entire world were trembling with rage.

Cracking sounds echoed out as the ground shattered. The mountains which had previously collapsed were seemingly erased out of existence, transformed into nothing more than ash as an intense, indescribable pressure weighed down.

Blood sprayed out of the young man's mouth as he was sent tumbling backward. The Dao Sovereign also coughed up blood, and his legs trembled so hard that it seemed as if his kneecaps would shatter. The crushing pressure forced him to kneel down onto the ground, as did all of the other cultivators in the area.

They were incapable of standing up to the pressure, to the rage of Heaven and Earth, to the icy coldness radiating out of Meng Hao.

The pressure was such that they felt they couldn't hold on for very much longer. Even Patriarch Chi Feng, an 8-Essences Paragon on the verge of breaking through to 9-Essences, had the same reaction.

It was as if... an enormous hand had descended from up above... a hand to return the slap which had been inflicted onto Yan'er. Apparently, Meng Hao didn't have to make an actual move at all: that pressure alone was enough to wipe the Eighth Sect completely off of Planet Vast Expanse.

"Exalted... exalted Ninth Paragon...." the Dao Sovereign stammered. He had no choice but to speak. If he didn't, he would be wiped out of existence by that incredible pressure.

Even as the words left his mouth, colors flashed in the sky as numerous beams of light flew through the air at incredible speed. A moment later the Sect Leader appeared, along with the other 9-Essences Paragons.

Even Jin Yunshan and Sha Jiudong appeared, to hover there in midair, looking down. None of them spoke.

Even the Sect Leader was unsure of whether Meng Hao intended to actually destroy the entire Eighth Sect.

Some of them looked over at Yan'er, eyes glittering thoughtfully.

Meng Hao didn't seem to care at all that the group of 9-Essences Paragons had arrived. He had long since thought the matter through clearly. As of now, he was harboring no secrets. If people knew about Yan'er, fine. If they didn't, it was also fine. In his current state of mind, he truly didn't care what people thought.

"Who hit you?" he asked, looking over at Yan'er. Before she could even respond, his gaze fell upon the young man. "Was it him?"

As the words left the mouth, power from seemingly nowhere crushed down onto the young man. He screamed and struggled to back up, blood spurting out of wounds all over his body.

"I didn't do it on purpose!" he cried in a pleading voice. "I... I didn't know, I... I..." He was trembling from fear, true fear that had reached the pinnacle. He was even more scared than Yan'er had been only moments ago.

Even in his wildest dreams, he would never have imagined that a simple outing in which he took a liking to a cultivation vessel, would result in something like this. It was something he had done many times in the past, but this time... unexpectedly... he had provoked a disaster.

As of this moment, hatred for his Dao Protector burned all the way down to his bones. He wished he could rip the man to shreds. After all, it was impossible to forget how the Dao Protector had told him... to enjoy himself with the girl.

Without the Dao Protector's assurances, the young man would never have touched a girl with such incredibly high connections.

Furthermore, deep in his heart, he almost found it too fantastic to believe, this Yan'er had such a background, and yet... Why the hell didn't

you say anything? If you had said something, I would've at least confirmed it, even if I didn't believe you. The worst thing is, you're backed by someone so powerful he can kill us all with a single word, and yet... you didn't say anything!!

The young man felt as if he had been deceived, wronged. However, before he could say another word, Yan'er glared at him and said in a loud voice: "Yeah, it was him!!"

Her words were like a death sentence. The young man's vision turned dark as Meng Hao waved his finger, sending killing intent speeding toward his forehead.

A pop could be heard as the boy's head exploded into a cloud of blood and gore, killing him instantly.

Meng Hao slaughtered him as easily as if he had popped the neck of a baby chicken. However, his rage was not sated.

"And him!" Yan'er cried, pointing at the Dao Sovereign. "He... he just said that he was going to go cause trouble for my Master!" Shock filled the Dao Sovereign's face, and a sensation of deadly crisis exploded within him. His hatred for his own son was no less than the son's hatred for his Dao Protector.

"Dammit! DAMMIT!" A tremor ran through him, and he was just about to say something in his defense when Meng Hao's eyes flickered coldly. He waved his right finger, and the Dao Sovereign's head exploded, killing him just as his son had been killed.

Before dying, the Dao Sovereign's venomous hatred rose to intense heights. Strangely, he didn't hate Meng Hao so much as he hated his unfilial son. He could never have imagined that all the honor and glory he had built up in his lifetime would be wiped away by someone his own son had provoked.

Everyone in the area was trembling.

"And those people too!" Yan'er said through gritted teeth, pointing out at the crowd. "All of them wanted to go cause trouble for my Master too!"

Although it was impossible to tell exactly who she was pointing at, as her finger swept out over the crowd, they felt as if the gaze of the underworld were boring into their hearts.

“Him?” Meng Hao asked, pointing out an old man from Chi Feng’s bloodline, who had been coldly preparing to go to the ninth continent. The man trembled, and before he could even speak a word, his head exploded.

“And him?”

“Him too?”

“What about him?”

Meng Hao’s voice was cool. Every time he spoke, Yan’er would nod, and heads would explode. None of them even had a chance to cry out.

Soon, the ground was awash with blood. Meng Hao had killed dozens of people with brutal efficiency, all of whom had been preparing to join Chi Feng’s bloodline to go to the ninth continent.

As for the ones who had been hesitating earlier, Meng Hao didn’t ask about any of them.

There were some people who had been preparing to join Chi Feng’s bloodline who stood there ashen-faced as they waited for Yan’er to call them out. However, because of some bit of confusion on her part, she shook her head when it came to them. Tears streamed out of the eyes of those cultivators as they realized that they had just narrowly escaped death. Their gratitude toward Yan’er simply couldn’t be expressed in words.

The entire Eighth Sect was as silent as death. Everyone was on their knees, trembling, as Meng Hao gave vent to his rage like a spirit of death.

It was at this point that the Sect Leader cleared his throat.

“Ninth Paragon, calm down... the punishment has been carried out. You’re not really going to wipe out the entire Eighth Sect are you?”

Meng Hao looked over at the Sect Leader and asked, “I couldn’t possibly wipe out the entire sect. However, don’t think things are over yet.”

With that, he looked into the depths of the Eighth Sect, and spoke out in a voice that crashed like thunder.

“Chi Feng, get the hell out here!” He flicked his sleeve, causing rumbling sounds to fill Heaven and Earth. Patriarch Chi Feng emerged from the depths of the sect, his heart filled with hatred toward his son and grandson. His face was taut with bitterness, and as pale as death. Inwardly, he was roaring in rage, although not toward Meng Hao, but rather, toward his son and grandson.

To him, not even death could expunge the deeds committed by those two, which had sucked him into a catastrophe....

Without the slightest hesitation, he flew through the air to appear directly in front of Meng Hao.

Instantly, he clasped hands and bowed deeply.

“Chi Feng... offers greetings... greetings to the exalted Ninth Paragon.” His heart trembled as he completely ignored the corpses of his son and grandson. If he could, he would have killed them himself.

Other people might not know what it was like to face an enraged Meng Hao, but how could he not know? He had personally witnessed Meng Hao cut down the Eighth Paragon in the necropolis, and had also watched his battle with Jin Yunshan. He was well aware that Meng Hao was invincible when inside the necropolis, and was a figure of incomparable terror.

Chi Feng gritted his teeth. He knew full well that because of what had occurred today, he had to offer compensation, otherwise he would be killed. To the masses, he was a preeminent 8-Essences Paragon, someone who would soon reach the 9-Essences level and become the ruler of the Eighth Sect.

However, he knew that even if he became the new Eighth Paragon, he would still have to bow his head to the Ninth Paragon. He couldn't simply wait for Meng Hao to demand compensation for what had happened. He had to admit fault and take responsibility. Therefore, he quickly lifted his hand up and smashed his palm onto his forehead.

A boom rang out, and he shivered as a rift tore open on his forehead, from within which blood sprayed like a fountain. His body then exploded.

His soul flew out, trembling and clasping hands toward Meng Hao.

“Ninth Paragon, please calm your wrath....” he said, prostrating himself.

The surrounding cultivators gasped in response to what they were seeing. Everyone in the Eighth Sect was paying rapt attention, and now their hearts trembled with fear and awe as they looked over at Meng Hao.

Meng Hao eyed Chi Feng’s soul, and calmed down somewhat. If Chi Feng hadn’t been so straightforward, if he had waited for Meng Hao to speak, then he might not have ended up dead, but he would have been forever cut off from the 9-Essences level.

Now, his fleshly body was destroyed, which would be a big setback, but wouldn’t prevent him from obtaining his ninth Essence.

Meng Hao looked deeply at Patriarch Chi Feng, then turned away, taking Yan’er with him as he left the eighth continent.

Along with his departure, the intense pressure weighing down on the Eighth Sect faded away. Everyone breathed sighs of relief. This day was one the cultivators of the Eighth Sect would never be able to forget.

Chapter 1457: Vast Expanse Shrine!

Meng Hao did not exterminate the Eighth Sect. He did not take the grief for the Mountain and Sea Realm that lurked in his heart and vent it upon the world. He was not young anymore. He had practiced cultivation and experienced the transformations of time. He had long since lost track of how many years it had actually been.

The debt which he owed to Chu Yuyan still had to be paid. And yet, because his heart had been taken away along with the Mountain and Sea Butterfly, in his mind, the only thing that he could give as payment was the relationship between a Master and an apprentice.

For Chu Yuyan, he could hold back from investigating Han Bei.

For Chu Yuyan, he could allow his clone, who was at a critical juncture of gaining enlightenment of the Ninth Hex, to take up the responsibility of caring for her.

Because of Chu Yuyan, his lonely existence in the Vast Expanse School... now contained something warm and familiar, something that he would not allow others to interfere with. It was a simple desire... to protect her.

Chu Yuyan had lost her memories of her previous life, but not necessarily forever. Her memories were still in Meng Hao's possession; he just wasn't sure whether or not he should return them to her.

However, he was still willing to allow her to be his weak spot. That weak spot had been prodded, and thus was birthed his rage toward the Eighth Sect. He had not held back, but neither had he gone on a mindless massacre. He had killed the culprits and the accomplices, as well as those who intended to be accomplices.

By his actions, he issued a warning to all cultivators on Planet Vast Expanse, including Han Bei. No one... was to trifle with Yan'er. If they did, then Meng Hao would appear, and his rage would shock Heaven and Earth.

Along with that rage... rivers of blood would flow.

Because of what had occurred, some people now realized there was a connection between him and Fang Mu. However, Meng Hao didn't care.

In all of the Vast Expanse School, only a few people would possibly be able to guess what that connection was. Furthermore, Meng Hao now had some new ideas regarding the path to be tread by his clone.

Currently, Meng Hao's true self was taking Chu Yuyan back to the ninth continent and the Ninth Sect. There, in a certain mountain range, were his clone's secluded meditation facilities. His clone slowly opened his eyes, and they shone with an icy light, as though a detached coldness were brewing inside of him.

"I've been in seclusion for too long," thought Meng Hao. "Apparently, people think that anyone can provoke me. I'm still Meng Hao, but there are still things... that only my true self can accomplish. It's a bit embarrassing." This was Meng Hao's clone, but it was still Meng Hao. He rose to his feet, not to leave the Ninth Sect, but rather, to head to a certain mountain peak within the sect.

At the top of that mountain was a high tower that was called... the Vast Expanse Shrine!

In the Ninth Sect, all disciples could challenge the Vast Expanse Shrine, with the results determining their standing in the rankings. It was a place that the entire Ninth Sect always paid close attention to.

All of the sects in the Vast Expanse School had a tower like this. There were nine of them, and anyone who could take first place in the rankings on one of them, would rock all of Planet Vast Expanse, and would become a Vast Expanse Chosen!

It was a completely different matter than the stir caused by Fang Mu's Immortal Tribulation.

In fact, it wasn't even necessary to take first place. Anyone who entered the top 100 would be considered one of the true Chosen of the nine sects. If Meng Hao's clone could get into the top 100 in the Vast Expanse Shrine, then he would rise from being an Inner Sect disciple in his subdivision, to being an Inner Sect disciple of the Ninth Sect's main division.

If he could enter the top 30, then he would become... a Conclave disciple!

Then there were the top 3 spots, which came with the title of Legacy disciple of the entire Ninth Sect!

Meng Hao was already walking on the path leading to the mountain, his expression calm. The other disciples he passed would look over at him in surprise. At first, most people didn't recognize him, but after a moment they would recall events from the past, and scorn would then appear in their eyes.

"Isn't that Junior Brother Fang Mu, who went from mortal to Immortal in ten years?" someone asked. "What's he doing here?"

"He's a real weirdo," replied a friend of his. "He pretty much never comes out in public. His apprentice Yan'er is a real beauty though." It was in that moment that Meng Hao suddenly turned back to look at the man.

The gaze was nothing out of the ordinary, but for some reason, it caused the man to tremble, and his mind to become a complete blank. Without even thinking about it, he backed up a few paces. By the time he regained his composure, Meng Hao was far off in the distance.

The man hesitated, and was thinking of making another comment, but his gut told him that now was the time to keep quiet. Taking a deep breath, he said nothing further.

The Vast Expanse Shrine of the Ninth Sect was located on the highest point of the highest mountain in the sect, in the very middle of the sect. Meng Hao's expression was calm as he continued to pass more and more fellow disciples.

Most of the people were unfamiliar with him, but after he passed them, they would recall his previous actions in the sect.

The majority made joking comments as he passed them by and continued on. As he proceeded, he encountered more and more disciples.

"Isn't that Fang Mu? This is the first time I've seen him here. Could it be that he's about to have a cultivation base breakthrough?"

“Is he heading toward the Vast Expanse Shrine? How amusing. Does he really think so much of himself that he thinks he qualifies to challenge the Vast Expanse Shrine?”

Meng Hao could hear the things people were saying, but his expression was the same as ever as he proceeded onward.

Soon, he reached the foot of the mountain. When he looked up, he saw a stone stele about thirty meters tall, upon which were lines of script, which were names.

These names were the top 3,000 cultivators from the Ninth Sect who had participated in the trial by fire of the Vast Expanse Shrine.

Although everyone on the list were extraordinary individuals, only those in the top 1,000 could be considered blazing suns. The top 100 were officially Chosen.

Meng Hao scanned the list, then looked back toward the peak of the mountain.

The mountaintop pierced through the clouds, and had a staircase winding up it into the sky.

Meng Hao didn't know much about the Vast Expanse Shrine, only what he had heard from Yan'er.

He knew that the trial by fire of the Vast Expanse Shrine didn't just refer to the tower at the top of the mountain. It also included the staircase which started at the foot of the mountain.

The people who were able to make it all the way to the tower itself would make it into the top 100. Furthermore, one's progress didn't have much to do with one's cultivation base, but rather, one's relative battle prowess and potential.

“I've been hiding away for too long,” he thought. “When people heard that Yan'er's Master was Fang Mu, it didn't mean much, and my true self had to handle the situation.” He shook his head.

“Well then, it's time to make a scene. Yan'er deserves a master who has

taken 1st place on the Ninth Sect's Vast Expanse Shrine. That will make the little girl happy.

"If it's not enough, then I'll just have to take 1st place on all nine Vast Expanse Shrines. If that's not enough, then I might just have to try out the Transcendence Path." Meng Hao smiled, and his eyes glittered brightly. Within the Vast Expanse School, there were more than enough locations to earn rankings of some sort or another. However, there were only two locations which people throughout the sects, and even the Paragons, took very seriously.

One was the location to test potential and latent talent, which was... the Vast Expanse Shrine. The other was the Vast Expanse School's one and only... Transcendence Path!

It bore the name Transcendence, but the truth was... although Transcendence was a possibility, what was more likely was that those who walked it would benefit from the Baptism. According to the legends, if you could reach a certain point on the Transcendence Path, you would receive a Baptism, and thus, good fortune!

As for how far the Transcendence Path stretched, no one knew. However, it was well known that the person who had walked the furthest along it was not the Sect Leader, but rather, a woman by the name of Bai Wuchen.

She was also commonly known as Immortal Bai Wuchen!

However, not even she had reached the end of the path. Perhaps the difficulty level of that path was why the Sect Leader and the others placed their hope in the necropolis.

Meng Hao gathered his thoughts, then calmly took a step forward onto the first step of the staircase.

1 step. 2 steps. 3 steps....

No one paid him much attention. In fact, few people would pay attention to anyone in the starting stages of the Vast Expanse Shrine. Meng Hao walked along, climbing up the stairs, facing increasing levels of pressure.

To some people, taking even half a step would be difficult. But to Meng Hao, it was like strolling along a level path. He didn't seem pressured at all, and maintained the same speed the entire time as he continued upward.

10 steps. 30 steps. 50 steps. 80 steps. 100 steps....

Meng Hao wasn't the only person climbing the steps. Ahead of him were a few hundred people who had been in the process of climbing during recent days. It was a difficult process, and many of them would occasionally rest before struggling onward. To these disciples, this mountain was their hope of making a name for themselves.

Some people would even sit cross-legged to cultivate. However, when someone reached their limit, they would be teleported away. That was generally the only way people would leave.

There were quite a few people on the mountain who suddenly saw Fang Mu pass by. When they realized how casually he was walking along, and how he didn't seem to have any difficulty whatsoever in climbing the stairs, their jaws dropped.

They saw him proceeded along rapidly, leaving all the other disciples behind, and soon, a bit of an uproar ensued.

"Hey... who's that?!?!"

"How can he be walking so fast?!?! This is 300 stairs in, and the pressure is intense. He... he isn't even pausing at all!!"

"How is that even possible...? Could it be... could it be that he's one of the blazing suns?!?!" The cultivators on the mountain looked on with reeling minds, and soon the sounds of their exclamations echoed out.

That sound grew louder as Meng Hao passed one Ninth Sect cultivator after another. There were some who, upon seeing him pass them so casually, mistakenly believed that the pressure from the trial by fire had suddenly disappeared. They then subconsciously stepped out, only to be slammed down into the ground or even ejected from the mountain.

"Who is that? He... he's already reached the 700th stair!!"

“Heavens! He’s almost past 800 stairs! Whenever someone reaches the 1000th stair, a bell tolls, shaking the whole sect!!” More and more conversations broke out on the mountain. Meanwhile, Meng Hao’s true self had arrived with Yan’er.

“You... you really aren’t my Master?” she asked as they landed outside Fang Mu’s residence. When she looked at the majestic and supreme Ninth Paragon, she didn’t feel any fear or reverence at all. In fact, she somehow felt familiar with him, which left her very confused.

Almost as soon as the words left her mouth, an ancient-sounding bell tolled out from the Vast Expanse Shrine, filling the Ninth Sect.

Dong....

The sound was clear, ancient, and sonorous, and it instantly attracted the attention of the disciples of the Ninth Sect. The sound of discussions rose up, and Meng Hao’s true self smiled and tousled Yan’er’s hair.

“Your Master is challenging the Vast Expanse Shrine. Why don’t you go cheer him on?” With that, Meng Hao’s true self turned and vanished.

Yan’er was left gaping in shock. Then, she seemed to recall something in particular, and turned to look toward the Mount Vast Expanse.

“Huh? The old fogey is challenging the Vast Expanse Shrine? Um... isn’t that something for young people to do to make a name for themselves? Elite disciples like Elder Brother Bi Yun?” Eyes flickering with disbelief, and heart pounding, she took to flight toward the mountain and the Vast Expanse Shrine.

Chapter 1458: The Long and Broad View

The ancient sound of the bell echoed out through the Ninth Sect. It was like a gust of wind from ancient times, filling the sect, causing the eyes of countless disciples to go wide as they looked in the direction of the mountain peak where the Vast Expanse Shrine was located.

“Someone challenging the Vast Expanse Shrine actually... passed 1,000 stairs!!”

“That’s not very common. In the past several years, only a few people have done it.”

“I wonder who it is? The 1,000 stair bell can lead to a Baptism which gives good fortune. But it will only toll the first time someone reaches that many steps. Therefore, the bell can’t be tolling for a current Chosen, only someone new!”

The buzz of conversation rose up everywhere, and yet, it wasn’t filled with the sound of shock. After all... it was only a mere 1,000 stairs. Most people were simply curious as to who was making a name for the first time in the sect.

The curiosity soon faded, and everything went quiet. In fact, no one even flew over to the Vast Expanse Shrine to check out the situation other than the few hundred people who were already nearby. And in the Ninth Sect, which had tens of millions of members, a few hundred people... was like nothing.

However, all of the disciples who were below the 1,000 stair mark were completely shocked. All of them had watched as Meng Hao walked past them onto the steps they had been unable to reach. And then the bell tolled, and they all gasped.

They had no time to wonder who he was, but all of them had the intense premonition that this person... was completely exceptional!!

“He’s going too fast!!”

“I remember watching Elder Brother Bi Yun and some of the others, and

they were agile too, but... but they were all people who made it to the top 1,000. Some of them even reached the top 100!!”

“This guy... might be able to make it into the top 10,000 in the rankings!!” While everyone was shaking in astonishment, Meng Hao calmly continued on one step at a time. As he moved, he maintained the same pace, moving neither faster nor slower.

1,200 steps. 1,500 steps. He continued to pass other disciples, all of whom stared in shock as he casually walked by.

His relaxed appearance and way of walking caused more gasps to rise up.

1,800 steps.... Soon, he was approaching the 1,999th step!

On that step was a middle-aged cultivator, who stood there, eyes bloodshot, panting. His body trembled as he lifted his foot into the air, using all the strength he could muster, the full power of his cultivation base, to take that next step onto the 2,000th stair.

“You can do it, Xu Liu!” he growled to himself. “All you have to do is step down. Then the bell will toll, and you’ll receive the Baptism. Your cultivation base will make some progress, and you’ll finally be able to make a name for yourself in the sect!!” However, there was a power that seemed to rise up from the ground, making it impossible for him to lower his foot.

At this moment of incredible difficulty, he suddenly realized that there was a young man behind him. He was handsome, and seemed to have no trouble at all as he walked up. He even looked over with a smile.

The middle-aged man stared in shock. Feeling somewhat muddled, he had no chance to even react before Meng Hao walked past him, stepping onto the 2,000th step and then beyond.

“Impossible!!” the man thought, his mind reeling, his face filling with astonishment and shock. He looked at Meng Hao, and then at his own foot. To him, that step was one of incredible difficulty, and yet this young man had just walked on past it as if it were level ground. The man almost

couldn't believe what he had just seen.

Rumbling filled his mind, and his thoughts were thrown into chaos. A massive force pushed against him, making it impossible to make that final step. He staggered backward, looking up at Meng Hao's retreating back.

It was then that the bell tolled out yet again, this time, twice.

Dong, dong....

The sound echoed out from the Vast Expanse Shrine to fill the entire Ninth Sect, causing widespread astonishment.

The main reason for that was because the time between the first tolling of the bell and the second had been too short, less time than it takes an incense stick to burn!

"What's going on today? How funny. First someone reached the 1,000th step, and then right after that, someone reached 2,000 steps."

"Interesting, interesting. I wonder if someone will reach 3,000 steps next?" Countless people in the Ninth Sect were surprised, but then began to laugh and joke about it. It wasn't that people didn't think about the possibility of a single person causing the bell to toll twice. But when they realized that only enough time had passed for an incense stick to burn, they dismissed any such notions.

It seemed to be a complete impossibility. Unless... someone was walking up the steps who qualified to be in the top 1,000 of the Vast Expanse Shrine.

Even Yan'er was shocked as she flew through the air toward the Vast Expanse Shrine. Suddenly, keen anticipation rose up in her heart.

"Could it be... could it be that Master has something to do with the tolling of the bell?" Earlier, she would probably have taken that to be impossible. But now she couldn't shake the feeling that the Ninth Paragon and her Master were very similar. It wasn't that their facial features were exactly the same, but there was something about them, something about their auras, that was almost the same.

Yan'er's heart began to pound. She took out a medicinal pill and consumed it, causing her cultivation base to surge and giving her an added burst of speed.

The two bell tolls caused more disciples to gather. Before, there had been a few hundred, but now there were over a thousand, all of whom were looking up with interest at the Vast Expanse Shrine.

"It's too bad we can't see who it is that passed 1,000 steps, or whoever it was that passed 2,000 steps.... Maybe it's Elder Brother Xu Liu. I remember that, years ago, he got stuck at the 1,999th step!"

"The Vast Expanse Shrine has a total of 100,000 steps. In the first 10,000, a bell will toll for every thousand steps. After that, the bell tolls every 10,000 steps. Then, once you reach 80,000 steps, you'll be listed in the top 3,000, and your name will appear on the Vast Expanse Stele."

"I'm actually hoping to hear that third tolling of the bell." Everyone was talking and laughing, but no one really expected that a third bell toll would occur. But then....

The Vast Expanse Shrine shook, and the mountain shook as a third tolling of the bell... filled the air!

Dong, dong, dong!!

A series of three tolls echoed out, along with an ancient aura that buffeted the faces of the onlookers. The surrounding disciples cried out in astonishment, and their eyes went wide. Gasps could be heard as everyone looked up at the Vast Expanse Shrine.

It wasn't just that small group. More disciples in the Ninth Sect turned in their astonishment to look in the direction of the Vast Expanse Shrine.

"A third tolling of the bell!!"

"Not even enough time passed for an incense stick to burn!!"

"Who could this tolling be for...? How shocking! Three people caused the bell to toll today, one for 1,000 steps, one for 2,000 and one for 3,000...."

In sharp contrast, all of the disciples on the mountain below the 3,000

step mark were certain of what was happening. Their minds reeled, for they knew that it wasn't three people who had caused the bell tolls, it was... a single individual!

In less time than it takes three incense sticks to burn, he passed everyone. He was the one... to cause three tolls of the bell!

"How is this even possible? One incense stick's worth of time, one thousand steps...."

"Something big is happening today!!" None of these people felt much like climbing the stairs any more. They were panting as they looked up the staircase, almost as if they could see Meng Hao... causally climbing up one step after another.

To Meng Hao, it really was a casual thing. At this point, he had already climbed 3,500 stairs, and so far, hadn't felt any pressure at all. Furthermore, the three tolls of the bell left him tingling with traces of Baptism.

Unfortunately, it was always an incomplete feeling, as if the tolling of the bell hadn't reached the point where it could thoroughly Baptise him.

"Interesting," he thought. "It seems you need multiple tolls of the bell. The best would be to make sure they keep tolling constantly." He moved forward again, but instead of stepping up by a single step, he started taking them three at a time!

His speed tripled, and soon he reached the 3,700th step . Then 3,800. 3,900. 4,000!!

He whizzed past all of the cultivators who were between the 3,000th and 4,000th steps. They could hardly believe what they were seeing as a blurred figure raced past them, kicking up a wind.

"Who... who is that?"

Everyone was left with minds spinning as the fourth tolling of the bell rang out!!

The sound shook the entire Ninth Sect. More and more cultivators were

converging near the mountain. By now, there were several thousand, and the sound of their conversations rose up into the air.

However... before much conversation could take place, a fifth tolling of the bell rang out!!

Meng Hao had increased his speed again! Instead of walking up the stairs three at a time, he was taking them ten at a time! Because of that increased speed, the sixth tolling of the bell rang out, and moments later, the seventh! They were tolling together!

Before the sound of the seventh tolling of the bell faded away, the eighth tolling began.... What a shocking turn of events! Next was the ninth tolling, which shook the whole sect. Then the tenth.... Everyone was staring with wide eyes and slack jaws.

Chapter 1459: You're Fang Mu!

Dong, dong, dong, dong.... Dong, dong, dong, dong.... Dong, dong, dong, dong.... The sonorous tolling bell represented something holy, something that would attract widespread envy, and yet at the moment the sound was ringing out as though a mortal were simply pounding on a drum... and doing it as many times as he felt like.

To hear the bell tolling in this fashion was something that had never occurred in the history of the Ninth Sect. Throughout all the years, never had it sounded out so many times in such a short period of time....

“What... what... what is happening? What’s going on?! How many people are there causing the bell to toll so many times?”

“But... but how come it seems like it’s actually being caused by one person? Otherwise, it would be far too coincidental.... But if it’s a single person, that would simply be a violation of common sense. It would make more sense for it to be a coincidence than for it to be caused by one person.”

The Ninth Sect was completely and utterly stirred up by what was happening. Virtually all of its cultivators were in flight toward the mountain, whether they were in the Immortal Realm or even the Ancient Realm.

People crowded around, millions of them, even tens of millions. They came from all directions to gather around the Vast Expanse Shrine. Some of them didn’t fly over, but sent divine sense out to lock down onto the mountain.

Up in midair, Yan’er looked on with wide eyes. She heard the bell tolling, and saw countless cultivators flying up into the air, and was a bit taken aback. She almost couldn’t believe that this was being caused by her Master.

Even more shocked than everyone else were the cultivators beneath 10,000 steps in the trial by fire. They were completely and utterly astonished as they stared up the mountain peak, the sound of the bell

ringing in their ears. Their minds were total blanks, and the very same types of questions were buzzing in all of their heads.

“Who is this guy?!”

“He seemed familiar, but I can’t seem to place exactly who he is!”

Most people were completely shocked, but there were certain individuals within the Ninth Sect who didn’t have much of a reaction at all. Of course, the Elders and the Dao Realm experts weren’t surprised, but there was an additional group who were similarly ambivalent. They were the blazing suns of the Ninth Sect, the weakest of whom had placed in the top 10,000 names on the Vast Expanse Shrine.

They didn’t care much at all about the commotion. Unless they felt a threat from Fang Mu, to them, it was all just a big ruckus.

“Whether it’s a single person, or a group, it doesn’t matter until they pass 50,000 steps. Before then, it’s mostly meaningless.”

“Anyone who passes 50,000 steps can be listed in the top 10,000. Likewise, 80,000 steps puts you in the top 3,000.”

“Mount Vast Expanse itself doesn’t count for much. It’s only when you reach the Vast Expanse Shrine itself that you truly count as Chosen, and can be listed in the top 100!” All of those people had incredible natural talent, and back when they challenged the Vast Expanse Shrine, had caused huge commotions. As such, they took the matter in stride, and in fact, didn’t even care.

However, there were a few of them who were slightly curious, so they flew over and began to climb up the mountain. There were actually a few thousand people who did so, their goal being, not to challenge the Vast Expanse Shrine, but to see who exactly it was that was causing the tolling of the bell. Was it a group, or was it... an individual!?

If a group was involved, then it wouldn’t matter much. However, if it was an individual, that would be a different story....

Many of the people who had stepped onto the path just now had previously reached a location somewhere beneath 50,000 steps. In their

minds, catching up with either a group or an individual would be a simple task.

Meng Hao was now standing on the 10,000th step, his eyes closed. As the bell tolled out, he experienced a Baptism. To most people, that was a process that would take quite some time, but for him, it only took about ten breaths of time.

After all, he was already equipped with incredible latent talent, so the Baptism was almost like a decoration on something that was already perfect. Although it did benefit him, it wasn't fundamentally shocking.

"Not bad," Meng Hao thought. "It seems I underestimated this Vast Expanse Shrine." His eyes flickered with anticipation regarding the upcoming bell tolls.

"Well, I should probably move a bit faster then." Smiling, he flickered into motion, this time, each stride took him... 100 steps!!

Ten paces, 1,000 steps. Soon, he reached 11,000 steps. 13,000 steps. 15,000 steps. 18,000 steps. And then... 20,000 steps!

To Meng Hao, 10,000 steps was only 100 paces. However, to the cultivators who were actually participating in that part of the trial by fire, it was like a blast of wind had just swept past them....

When Meng Hao stepped onto the 20,000th step, two bell tolls could be heard. However, they were different than before, deeper, more ancient, more shocking!

As soon as the sound echoed out, people outside the mountain were astounded.

Of the people charging up the mountain to try to catch up and glimpse the person causing the bell to toll, the fastest was still 10,000 steps away from Meng Hao. All of those people were shaken, and their eyes were wide with disbelief.

"20,000... 20,000 steps!!"

"That was faster than it takes an incense stick to burn! That was... a few

dozen breaths of time. How could the bell already be tolling for the 20,000th step!?!?!"

Numerous such cries rose up from the crowd outside the mountain, creating a sound wave that surged out in all directions.

As for Meng Hao, he was shaking a bit because of the Baptism from the bell toll. His eyes were shining as he sensed that his cultivation base was on the verge of a breakthrough.

He smiled, striding forward once again. 23,000 steps. 27,000 steps. Eventually... 30,000 steps!!

The bell tolled, leading to widespread astonishment and shock.

"What... what is going on today? There are so many people making breakthroughs! Hahaha. Ha ha.... How strange...."

The discussion and outcry soon died down, until silence prevailed among the countless cultivators watching the mountain.

They would have to be much more stupid than they were to not understand by this point that it was not a group doing this, but rather... a single individual!!

And yet, no one dared to ponder the matter. If the bell really was tolling for a single person, then... that would be a mind-blowing turn of events.

From the beginning until this moment, only enough time had passed for a few incense sticks to burn. If it was a single person, he had used that much time to go from the first step all the way to... step number 30,000! If anyone spoke the words aloud, it would be almost impossible to believe. In the history of the Ninth Sect, it was something that had never happened.

"Maybe it's a mistake. Maybe... something's wrong with the mountain?"

"Perhaps it's just a big coincidence, and not a single person...."

The onlookers didn't have to wait for long before the fourth tolling could be heard. Everyone was astonished, and the tolling of the bell caused them to literally shake. Strange gleams could be seen in their eyes, and their minds spun. Yan'er finally arrived at the mountain, her eyes wide and her

heart racing.

The tolling for the 40,000th stair echoed out in all directions. The people who had begun to climb the steps in the hope of catching up were now completely dumbfounded, and gave up. By now, their question had been answered.

However, there was one person among that group who didn't give up! Gritting his teeth, he pressed forward.

His speed was actually a bit greater than Meng Hao's. By the time Meng Hao reached 45,000 steps, he was at step number 40,000. He was huffing and puffing, for although his limit was somewhere between 45,000 and 48,000 stairs, to speed up 40,000 steps in one shot was not an easy task by any stretch of the imagination.

As of this point, he could just barely make out the image of... a single person about 5,000 steps beyond him. That was absolute confirmation that it wasn't a group who was causing this scene!

When he saw that it was indeed a single person, he gasped, and his mind reeled. Although he, like many of the others racing up the mountain, had asked some of the fellow disciples along the way, and had already been told the truth, he was still left shaken.

To verify the matter with his own eyes left his heart battered with waves of shock. Even as he proceeded onward to try to get a closer look, Meng Hao passed step number 47,000. Then, ten more paces brought him to 48,000 steps. Another ten paces, and he was at 49,000.

"This... this...." gasped the cultivator behind him, completely shocked. Considering how fast Meng Hao was going, and how relaxed he seemed, this man had the strong premonition that... the Ninth Sect would soon have a heretofore-unheard of Chosen!

"Who are you?!?!" he yelled at the top of his lungs.

Meng Hao stopped in place and looked back, a quizzical expression on his face. Although he didn't say anything, the cultivator got a clear view of his face.

When that happened, a tremor ran through the man. Although other people didn't have a very strong impression of Fang Mu, this particular man had been watching when he passed his Tribulation, and as such, he definitely recognized him.

"Fang Mu... you're Fang Mu!!" The shock was so great that his heart trembled and his cultivation base grew unstable. He couldn't keep moving, and rumbling sounds echoed out as he was teleported off of the mountain.

As soon as he appeared outside, he shouted out as loud as he could, in a voice that all of the countless cultivators outside of the mountain could hear.

"I saw him. It's one person, not a group. It's... Fang Mu! He's the one who only took ten years to go from mortal to Immortal... Fang Mu! He just went from the first step all the way to step number 50,000, in almost no time at all!"

The man's voice rang out for everyone to hear.

Everyone was nearly struck dumb with shock, even Yan'er. Everyone was now thinking of the name Fang Mu.

Countless gasps could be heard, and after a moment, a huge commotion broke out. It was then that... the fifth tolling of the bell could be heard!!

Dong, Dong, Dong, Dong, Dong....

Ancient, sonorous, without compare. The bell was shocking to the extreme, and as it echoed out into the sect, and into the hearts of all, it merged with the name they were thinking about, transforming into something beyond incredible!

Chapter 1460: A Smile From the Peak!

By the time the echoing toll of the bell faded away, everyone outside of the mountain was profoundly and deeply shaken by the name Fang Mu.

“Fang Mu, who went from mortal to Immortal in ten years! The one whose Immortal Tribulation was so shocking that even the Ninth Paragon appeared? That... Fang Mu?”

“I can’t believe it’s him. After he went from mortal to Immortal in only ten years, he vanished without a trace. He hasn’t been seen at all in the sect. It’s actually him!!”

“Back then, people took him to be an incredible Chosen. Now, after twenty years, he appears again! Could it be that he had a cultivation base breakthrough and is in the Ancient Realm now!?!?”

Everyone was in an uproar as they suddenly recalled Fang Mu. All the shocking things he had done back then overlapped with what was happening now, leaving everyone completely shocked.

Even back then, there had been many people who had looked down on him. But now, such derision was pale and feeble, and couldn’t stand up at all to the tolling of the bell for the 50,000th step.

In all of the Ninth Sect, there were only about 10,000 who could reach 50,000 steps. That didn’t necessarily indicate that their cultivation bases were extremely high; the Vast Expanse Shrine tested a person’s potential and overall power. Cultivation base wasn’t really important.

In response to the tolling of the bell, Yan’er began to pant, and stare over at the Vast Expanse Shrine, mind a blank. Almost immediately, the cultivators in the area recognized her as Fang Mu’s apprentice.

One by one they began to look over, and although their expressions seemed the same as they had been moments before, deep within their eyes could be seen flickers of envy and awe. Awe of Yan’er’s Master!

Anybody could see that, considering his momentum, Fang Mu wouldn’t be stopping at 50,000 steps. As for how far he would go in the end... no

one could say at the moment.

Even as the bell tolled for the 50,000th step, many cultivators who occupied the top 10,000 spots in the Ninth Sect emerged from secluded meditation and headed toward the mountain.

Before reaching the 50,000th stair, Fang Mu was on a lower level than them. But now, they could sense a threat, and thus, a stream of people began to arrive.

“Look, it’s Elder Brother Chen Zhan! He’s in the top 10,000!”

“Elder Brother Liu Yun is here!”

“It’s Elder Sister Sun Luo....” Everyone in the area was buzzing with conversation regarding the numerous extraordinary and illustrious figures from the Ninth Sect who were showing up.

As they appeared, the surrounding cultivators would back away to give them space, making them very easy to spot within the crowd.

At the same time, Meng Hao stood on the stairs on the mountain, well aware of the commotion that must be underway outside. Smiling, and not caring a bit, he immersed himself in the Baptism from the tolling of the bell. Inside of him, his cultivation base was now only a hair away from a breakthrough.

However, that was of only secondary importance. Of even greater significance was that the sealing mark of the Ninth Hex, which he had been working on from his first day in the sect, was becoming clearer and clearer.

After ten breaths of time passed, he opened his eyes and proceeded along. This time, he moved even faster than before, as if the pressure from the mountain wasn’t affecting him at all.

55,000 steps. 58,000 steps. Then, he passed 60,000, and without even a pause, he flew like the wind until he reached 62,000 steps. He whistled along, getting higher and higher. By the time the bell began to toll for the 60,000th stair, he was at the 63,000th stair. As he began to vibrate inwardly, he chuckled and increased his speed. Soon he was on the

67,000th stair, and then a huge leap took him directly to... the 70,000th stair.

It was only when he landed on that stair that the bell from the 60,000th stair ended, followed immediately by the bell for the 70,000th stair, creating a combined thirteen tolls of the bell. The entire Ninth Sect was shaken, and even the blazing suns of the sect who were in the audience wore expressions of utter astonishment.

It must be stated that when the tolling bells from the later 10,000 stairs combined, it was completely different from the combined tolling of bells in the first 10,000 set of stairs. The difference was like the difference between Heaven and Earth!

As the bell tolls combined, everyone was shaken, and not just the people in the vicinity of the mountain itself. All of the Chosen who had a spot in the top 3,000 on the Vast Expanse Shrine were astonished. Everyone began to rush over to the mountain, even Dao Realm cultivators. The only exceptions were the people in the top 100.

More people streamed over to the vicinity of the Vast Expanse Shrine, where a hubbub of conversation rose up into the sky.

“I can’t believe this Fang Mu is so inhuman! He actually connected the tolling of the bells!!”

“How did he even do it? There are 10,000 steps between the 60,000 and 70,000 mark. That level of speed is unbelievable.”

Even as the sound of shocked conversations rose up, the stone stele at the bottom of the mountain glittered with bright light. Everyone looked over with mixed expressions as the very last name, the name in the 3,000th spot, was wiped away, vanishing forever... to be replaced by another name!

The 3,000th place was now occupied by Fang Mu!

Although the name was small, and in very last place, the fact that it was even there led to a huge commotion.

Yan’er was trembling, her eyes shining with delight. When she saw her

Master's name on the stone stele, she began to dance with joy. As far as she could remember, this was the happiest moment in her life, and the most exciting, exceeding even the moment in which she had been saved by the Ninth Paragon.

By now, she had almost forgotten about Elder Brother Bi Yun.

Yan'er's eyes shone with anticipation, and her mood soared. "Who cares about the top 3,000? My Master can definitely get into the top 100!"

At the same time, more and more people were arriving in the area. They looked at the stone stele, then up at the Vast Expanse Shrine. These were all Chosen whose names were listed on the stone stele, and their appearance on the scene caused the other cultivators in the vicinity of the mountain to become even more excited than before.

"Gu Tianyi. Shao Minghao. Guo Tenglong. Han Ruonan...."

"I can't believe they're all here...."

Even as everyone made shocked exclamations, a handsome young man in a green robe appeared. His expression was cold, and his appearance perfect in every aspect.

The young female disciples in the area were instantly thrown into excitement.

"Elder Brother Bi Yun!"

This young man was extremely famous in the Ninth Sect. He had climbed all of the steps on the mountain, and had even entered the Vast Expanse Shrine itself.... Bi Yun.

Even Yan'er suddenly started to feel conflicted.

Meng Hao didn't care about what was happening outside the mountain. His expression was calm as he proceeded onward. Furthermore, his speed didn't reduce at all. He went even faster than before!

The pressure was increasing compared to below, but to Meng Hao, it was negligible. Now, instead of taking the steps 100 at a time, it was 500!

One pace, three paces, ten paces... twenty paces!

The next spot he appeared was at the 80,000th step. The bell tolled again, and yet Meng Hao didn't stop moving. Now, a single pace carried him 1,000 steps. Ten paces later, he was on the 90,000th step.

From there, he could look down at the entirety of the Ninth Sect and its swirling clouds. The pressure here was intense, to the point where Meng Hao was finally feeling some of its effects.

There was even a bit of sweat visible on his forehead.

"Now this is more like it," he said, smiling. "Otherwise it would have been too simple. Meaningless really." His eyes shone with a bright gleam. As the bell tolled, he took a deep breath, and once again increased his speed. One pace took him 2,000 steps!

He was flying upward!

Rumbling could be heard with each step. 92,000 steps. Another pace, and he was at 94,000. The Baptism from the tolling bell continued, and the fluctuations of his cultivation base grew more intense. A third pace put him at 96,000 steps.

Another step, and he was at 98,000....

Meng Hao was now only 2,000 steps from the top of the mountain. He could see the enormous tower that was the Vast Expanse Shrine, and he could see the sky stretching out above it. Below, the other mountains in the sect almost looked small. At the same time, the sealing mark of the Seal the Heavens Hex was becoming more complete.

"After these final 2,000 steps, will I qualify to enter the Vast Expanse Shrine?" His expression was calm as he lifted his foot up. When he put it down, he had crossed the final 2,000 steps, and was at the peak of the mountain!

100,000 steps!

Meng Hao's trip from the 1st step to the 100,000th was an unprecedented miracle in the Ninth Sect. Furthermore, the total amount of time he used didn't even exceed five incense sticks' worth of time!

It was at this point that Fang Mu's name rose rapidly up the stone stele. It went from 3,000th place to 2,500. Then 2,000. Then 1,000. Then 500, 400, 300, 200....

In the end, it appeared in... 100th place!

The speed with which it rose ensured that Fang Mu was now a legend!

The bell tolled, shaking Heaven and Earth. The Baptism effect on him was intense, filling his body. Also, for the first time, the group outside the mountain could actually see Meng Hao standing there outside the Vast Expanse Shrine.

He wore a long robe, which fluttered in the mountain breeze along with his hair. He seemed to have his eyes closed, and he looked every bit like an Immortal!

There was no hubbub of conversation, no cries of shock. There were only gasps as countless eyes... came to focus on that figure atop the mountain.

Meng Hao was now someone who would exist eternally within the memories of the people from the Ninth Sect.

Finally, the Baptism was over, and he opened his eyes. He looked down at the crowd which had gathered, and apparently he saw Yan'er. Even as she stood there in her excitement, Meng Hao's gaze softened. Smiling warmly, he waved at her.

His gaze, his smile, and his wave, were things that everyone in the crowd could see. Almost instantly, all eyes shifted from Meng Hao to Yan'er.

Her face flushed a bit. This was the first time she had ever been stared at by so many people, and it caused her heart to begin to thump. At the same time, an unfamiliar emotion rose up inside of her, almost like something which had existed in a previous life that was now awakening.

A strange look could be seen in her eyes as she looked at Meng Hao, an indescribable brightness. At the same time, her heart began to pound even faster.

After a long moment, she cleared her throat. Face red, she muttered to

herself, “Er, the old fogey sure doesn’t act like an old man at all. He really knows how to please the girls.”

The sun shone radiantly, and when it combined with Meng Hao’s gaze, it became...

A warmth which could pierce through to previous lives.

Chapter 1461: Vast Expanse Shrine! [1]

By now, virtually all of the disciples in the Ninth Sect were looking at the man standing at the very top of the mountain, in front of the Vast Expanse Shrine.

He looked like a celestial spirit standing there, robe fluttering in the wind, a warm smile on his face. It was a simple, warm smile, nothing more, and when he looked away from Yan'er, his gaze came to rest... on the Vast Expanse Shrine.

Although it was called a shrine, it was actually a huge tower with a total of ten levels.

In all of the Ninth Sect, only the disciples who reached this point on the mountain could qualify to be listed in the top 100 of the Vast Expanse Shrine.

Each one of those hundred cultivators were thoroughly famous within their sects. In fact, they were also well known among people in the other sects as well.

After all... in the Vast Expanse School, there were a total of nine Vast Expanse Shrines. In some ways, it could be said that those who made it into the top 100 on one of those nine shrines were actually within the top 1,000 of the entire Vast Expanse School.

In a sect with such a vast number of disciples, to be within the top 1,000... made one truly Chosen!

Therefore, when Fang Mu's name appeared among the top 100, the entire Ninth Sect was shaken. Countless individuals were paying close attention, and many had eyes shining with envy and passion. Chosen, as long as they didn't perish at some point, were destined to become pillars of the Vast Expanse School. Not only were they incredibly important to the sect, they were the type of figure others didn't dare to provoke.

As for Meng Hao, he had done something visibly different from the average Chosen. He had established a legend, having reached the top 100

in such a short time. Countless individuals within the sect were very curious about how far he would actually go in the end.

The area around the mountain was completely silent. No one cried out. All eyes were fixed on Meng Hao as he flicked his sleeve, turned, and strode toward the main door of the tower that was the Vast Expanse Shrine. When he reached it, he stretched out his hand and pushed.

Rumbling sounds echoed out as the door opened. Without the slightest hesitation, Meng Hao stepped into the first level of the Vast Expanse Shrine.

The Vast Expanse Shrine. It was a huge tower with ten levels, each one of which represented ten names. The amount of time spent within each of those levels would determine one's ranking on the list.

In almost the same moment that he stepped into the first level, brilliant light glittered, and he looked out to see a world stretching out in front of him. The sky was crimson, and the land was actually a sea of flames.

An intense pressure crushed down onto him, something so powerful that it seemed capable of crushing anything and everything. However, Meng Hao didn't seem to be affected very much at all. Although his divine sense and his soul felt incredible pressure, and he trembled, when he looked up at the crimson sky, his eyes shone with a bright light.

"It seems the first level of the Vast Expanse Shrine tests a person's willpower and tenacity. There is no pressure on the body, only the soul." Even as he stood there thoughtfully, the pressure suddenly exploded in intensity. Massive rumbling sounds echoed out, as the mounting pressure tried to force Meng Hao to submit.

He smiled. In terms of cultivation base, this clone of his couldn't be considered spectacular, but in terms of willpower... in all of Planet Vast Expanse, it would be easier to find a phoenix feather or a qilin horn than to find someone who could match Meng Hao's tenacious willpower.

His willpower had been forged within the Mountain and Sea Realm, and then had grown to new heights because of its destruction. He had experienced a complete transformation when defending the Mountains

and Seas against the Immortal God Continent and the Devil Realm. After all of his countless years of cultivation and other experiences, he had made shocking progress.

If he hadn't developed an incredible willpower throughout his life, he would long since have been destroyed. Now, standing here in the first level of this tower, even if the pressure were increased by a hundredfold, it wouldn't be anything more than a gentle breeze to him.

At the most, it might stir his hair, or cause his mind to shiver a bit.

Amidst the rumbling, the pressure intensified, and something like an enraged roar echoed out in all directions.

"Kneel!!" the voice roared. Power slammed onto Meng Hao, but his only reaction was to smile derisively. Disdain flickered in his eyes, and Immortal qi erupted out of him as he took a step forward and waved his sleeve.

"You'll be kneeling to me!" he growled. His willpower exploded out, the combination of everything from his third and fourth lives creating a Heaven-defying pressure that erupted out, causing the first level to shake.

Wild colors flashed, the wind screamed, and rumbling echoed out in all directions. In the short time it took Meng Hao to wave his sleeve, everything trembled so violently that the pressure was incapable of fighting back against his willpower and divine sense, and began to retreat.

Meng Hao took another step forward, and then another. Without pausing, he walked forward, his mental faculties growing stronger. Simultaneously, the pressure in the area grew weaker. By the time he took a ninth step, the situation was completely reversed, and instead of the pressure crushing down onto Meng Hao, he was crushing it!

This was the first time anything like this had ever occurred in the first level of the Ninth Sect's Vast Expanse Shrine. In the past, people had to endure for a set period of time to be able to pass into the next level.

But today... something entirely different was happening!!

It was a dazzling scene as Meng Hao's willpower and tenacity filled the

entire level, crushing the pressure and forcing it to submit to him.

In the end, he was like the lord of the entire level. His footfall could flatten Heaven and Earth, and finally, the pressure completely vanished!

The illusory world around him collapsed, and the entrance to the second level appeared in front of him.

Meanwhile, on the stone stele outside the mountain, the name Fang Mu rose up to 90th place, passing Bi Yun, much to the astonishment of people in the audience.

“Too... too fast!!” Bi Yun blurted in disbelief. He wasn’t the only person to react in such a way. Many other disciples in the top 100 had expressions of astonishment on their faces.

They knew how terrifying the first level was, which only served to increase their shock.

The disciples who had challenged the Vast Expanse Shrine in the past were already starting to speculate about what was happening. “There’s only one way he could do it so fast!” someone said. “He’s–”

Before the sentence could be completed, radiant light began to emanate from the first level.

“First Heaven! The First Heaven is appearing!!”

“I know that light! According to the stories, anyone who can create a legend in the Vast Expanse Shrine will cause the First Heaven to appear!!” The dazzling light which spread out seemed to replace the Heavens themselves, causing cries of shock to rise up from the cultivators outside of the mountain.

Even in ancient times, there was a legend related to the Vast Expanse Shrine. In any particular level, if a person could do something completely unheard-of, and reach the absolute pinnacle of a given level, then a radiant light would appear which represented... the light of Heaven!

Depending on the level involved, there were the First through the Tenth Heavens!

From ancient times until the present, it was uncommon for the First Heaven to appear. As for people who reached the Second Heaven, they were very rare, and when it came to the Third Heaven, there had only been nine people throughout the history of the Ninth Sect who had succeeded.

As for the Fourth Heaven... only two people had ever succeeded, and the Fifth Heaven... remained unseen throughout the entire long history of the Ninth Sect!

Now that the First Heaven had appeared, everyone in the Ninth Sect was boiling with excitement.

There were Dao Realm experts who appeared to bear witness; elders of the Ninth Sect, and Dao Lords showed their faces.

There were even Dao Sovereigns who flew over to the Vast Expanse Shrine.

Meng Hao stood there for a moment on the first level of the Vast Expanse Shrine, then stepped forward into the second level.

In that instant, he entered yet another new world, within which existed nothing more than a huge spell formation.

“Light up the spell formation,” a voice said. “Anyone who finishes within the time it takes an incense stick to burn will rise to the third level.”

Meng Hao sat down cross-legged, a thoughtful expression on his face. Almost as soon as he did, his cultivation base began to rotate rapidly, and his divine sense exploded out. His arteries and veins began to shine with crystalline light.

This level tested latent talent; lighting up the spell formation quickly required incredible latent talent. As for Meng Hao’s latent talent... that came from how his true self had re-moulded his body with the bronze lamp. It wasn’t even necessary to talk about how good or bad his latent talent was. This was the Vast Expanse School, and as far as Meng Hao could tell, his bronze lamp originally belonged to Patriarch Vast Expanse.

In other words, after being re-moulded by the bronze lamp, the latent talent of the clone he had subsequently created would be little different

than that of Patriarch Vast Expanse himself.

Using Patriarch Vast Expanse's latent talent to complete a trial by fire in the Vast Expanse School was essentially... like cheating!

Almost in the same moment that Meng Hao sat down, the spell formation lit up with bright light, and began to rumble.

From the time the Vast Expanse Shrine had been created until this time, nothing like this had ever happened. The spell formation was shining with incredible brightness!

Rumbling echoed out as the crowd outside saw brilliant dazzling light shining out from the second level. It was none other than... the Second Heaven!

It combined with the light from the First Heaven, creating a completely shocking spectacle.

"The Second Heaven! I can't believe... the Second Heaven has actually appeared!"

"No, no way! It happened too fast. How could he possibly have lit up the entire spell formation on the second level so quickly!?"

"What... what kind of latent talent does he have? How is this happening? Even if he has Superlative latent talent, he shouldn't be able to go that fast. It's like... he's cheating or something!" The group gathered near the mountain peak, all of whom were in the top 100, were in a complete uproar. As their voices rang out, more and more disciples were thrown into a commotion.

The Dao Realm experts and the sect Elders, even the Dao Sovereign, were all completely and utterly shocked.

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1. Yes, this is the exact same chapter title as 1457.

Chapter 1462: Establishing a Legend!

Meng Hao really was cheating. On the first level, he had relied on his willpower and mental faculties. Considering the experiences of his true self, there was virtually nothing that could surpass him in terms of that.

On the second level, he had also cheated. The test was of latent talent, or essentially, whether or not one was fundamentally suited to cultivate the techniques of the Vast Expanse School. As a matter of fact, what the Vast Expanse School considered to be Superlative latent talent, might not be considered so by other sects in the outside world.

That truth was the case everywhere. In different sects and schools, in different Realms and worlds, so-called latent talent was really just a measure of how suitable a person was to cultivate certain techniques.

Within the Vast Expanse School, the latent talent of Patriarch Vast Expanse... would naturally be the absolute, optimal latent talent!

Heaven and Earth rumbled as boundless light from two Heavens radiated out, to the uproar of the crowd. Meng Hao rose to his feet, coughing dryly, and yet feeling not the slightest bit of shame as he headed to the third level.

He hadn't been in the third level for very long when the entire place began to shine with dazzling light, which transformed into the Third Heaven. Before the tumult could die down in the crowd, the Fourth Heaven rumbled out.

Next was the Fifth Heaven, the Sixth and the Seventh. Meng Hao was truly forging a legend. Outside the mountain, the crowd was boiling with excitement, including ordinary Dao Realm experts, Dao Lords, and even Dao Sovereigns.

"This is unheard-of! This Fang Mu... is breaking all the records!"

"This is the first time a cultivator from our Ninth Sect has ever summoned the Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Heavens!"

"What do you guys think, is it possible that he'll... do something that's

never been done in the entire Vast Expanse School, and summon... the Tenth Heaven?!"

Keen anticipation filled the hearts of the audience. After all, no one in the Ninth Sect had ever even summoned the Fifth Heaven in the Vast Expanse Shrine.

However, even though the Ninth Sect's Vast Expanse Shrine was only one of several within the Vast Expanse School as a whole, there were others who had summoned the Fifth Heaven, and even the Sixth and Seventh Heavens. As for the Eighth Heaven, the number who had succeeded was miniscule, but they did exist.

And then there was the Ninth Heaven. Years ago, there had indeed been one person who had summoned it.

But as for that Tenth Heaven, it was completely unheard-of. In the entire history of the Vast Expanse School, it had never been seen!

The sound of the uproar echoed out, to the point that even the 7-Essences Paragon who kept watch over the Vast Expanse Shrine was visibly moved, and flew out in midair to observe.

A blank look could be seen in Yan'er's eyes. Her Master was shaking the entire world, something she almost couldn't believe, almost didn't dare to believe.

As the seven Heavens cast brilliant light into the sky, Meng Hao was slowly proceeding along into the eighth level. The third through seventh levels mostly tested aspects relating to latent talent in cultivation. Some of those tests looked at the blood itself, others looked at the blood vessels and arteries. Whatever the case, Meng Hao only had to step into the level to instantly do something which had never been done!

Any other result would have been impossible... him appearing in the trial by fire was almost the same as Patriarch Vast Expanse showing up. How could he not do the impossible, and complete the level perfectly?

On the stone stele, Fang Mu's name continued to rise until it was in the top 30!

All of the Chosen whom he had passed up were able to tell how easily he had swept past them. Their records were crushed as easily as dried weeds, as if they weren't even on the same level as him.

As for all of the disciples who still ranked above him, they were normally people who acted superior and mighty. But now, they were sitting there nervously. Even the people in the top 10 had ill premonitions bubbling within them.

After reaching the eighth level, Meng Hao slowed down a bit. It was now taking a bit of effort to make progress. By this point, the Vast Expanse Shrine was testing one's overall level of power. As for Meng Hao's clone, his weakest aspect was his cultivation base, which still hadn't left the Immortal Realm.

Virtually everyone in the top 10,000 were in the Ancient Realm; Meng Hao was definitely the only cultivator in the top 30 who wasn't. Furthermore, all those other people were at the peak Ancient realm, and some were even on the verge of breaking through to the Dao Realm!

However, the Vast Expanse Shrine had no Dao Realm experts in the rankings. It was a test only for disciples under the Dao Realm. Generally speaking, the test for people like that was the Transcendence Path.

Only a few people challenged that trial by fire who weren't in that Realm.

Within the eighth level, Meng Hao looked up into a starry sky, within which could be seen countless red-eyed shadows charging toward him violently.

Close examination revealed that the shadows all had threads attached to them; apparently, they were all puppets under the control of someone else.

The requirement of this test not to simply slaughter the enemy, but rather to seek out whoever was controlling the puppets, and kill that person.

Without doing that, the cultivator would be overwhelmed by the huge amount of foes, and would then be forced to wipe them out by means of

slaughter. Of course, with a sufficient cultivation base, that was always an option.

In fact, this test actually placed a high priority on cultivation base. All of the shadows were at the peak of the Immortal Realm, and after looking them over, Meng Hao quickly identified which one was in control, but could also tell that his cultivation base wasn't sufficient to ensure a kill.

Time seemed to slow down, and Meng Hao's eyes flickered with cold light. He knew that he had most likely reached his limit, and yet wasn't willing to just give up.

"Well, since that's the case, I might as well tackle my Ancient Tribulation right here. I'll go from the Immortal Realm into the Ancient, and see if I can take 1st place!" Without the slightest hesitation, he backed up. His eyes closed briefly, then opened again, and it was as if the world were exploding.

Rumbling sounds echoed out from him as his Immortal meridians began to explode. His cultivation base rose up, and the air of the Ancient Realm began to rise up within him.

As he started to transform, and his cultivation base aura began to rise; everything was shaking violently. At the same time, he shot forward like lightning to appear in front of one of the shadows, whereupon he shoved his palm out violently.

A boom could be heard as the shadow shattered. In that instant, all of the other shadows faded, as though the trial of this level were about to vanish.

But then, Meng Hao made a slight exclamation of surprise. According to his divine sense, there was actually another person within the shadows, controlling them.... As it turned out, there wasn't one person controlling them, but rather, two.

"A test hidden within the test, huh?" Without the slightest hesitation, he flickered into motion, appearing in front of another of the shadows. His palm launched out, and the shadow shattered. The other shadows were already mostly transparent, and now they seemed to be on the verge of

vanishing. However, it was at that point that Meng Hao suddenly waved his finger out in front of him.

A blast of wind shot out, slamming into one of the fading shadows some distance away, completely exterminating it!

In that instant, Meng Hao frowned as he realized that the number of individuals controlling the shadows had once again increased. It turned out there were now more than eight!

At the same time, the surrounding figures, including the controllers, were all rapidly vanishing. There didn't seem to be enough time to kill them all. Meng Hao's eyes flickered, and without the slightest hesitation he suddenly took in a deep breath, then performed a double-handed incantation gesture and pointed out.

It was none other than Demon Sealing Hexing magic! He was unleashing the Fourth Hex... the Self Hex!

Almost instantly, bizarre fluctuations began to spread out from Meng Hao. A ghost image rose up, and a second version of himself walked forward. Then a third, and a fourth, and a fifth...

In the blink of an eye, ten million incarnations of Meng Hao appeared. There were men and women, old and young, and they all looked somewhat different, and yet they were all Meng Hao!

This was the Self Hex, and as soon as it was unleashed, the countless versions of Meng Hao launched themselves toward the eight puppet controllers, cutting them down. Almost immediately, twelve new controllers appeared.

Slaughter ensued. In a short period of time, Meng Hao killed so many puppet controllers that he lost count. Eventually, the world faded away completely, and the eighth level was over.

Meng Hao's Self Hex faded away, and his incarnations vanished. He stood there in the middle of the eighth level, his cultivation base continuing to rise as his Immortal meridians began to transform into Immortal Soul Lamps.

The Immortal Soul Lamps didn't appear outside of him, but rather inside his body.

He took a deep breath, eyes flickering as he murmured, "That eighth level was incredible."

He now understood that the eighth level's test was a complex one. It tested one's cultivation base and divine sense, as well as one's judgement and observation. Not only did one have to identify the numerous controllers amidst the vast crowd, but then one actually had to kill them.

That was the way to pass the level, but in order to reach the absolute peak of perfection, one needed speed and instinct.

That was something Meng Hao couldn't actually do on his own, and had been forced to rely on the Self Hex to accomplish.

"I underestimated the Vast Expanse Shrine," he said, looking up toward the ninth level with anticipation.

It was at this point that brilliant light began to shine out from the eighth level. On the outside, all of the cultivators could now see... the Eighth Heaven!

The Ninth Sect was in a complete uproar, and was unprecedentedly shaken. From Paragons to ordinary disciples, tens of millions of people were all shouting out in excitement.

As for the Chosen in the top 20, they couldn't help but chuckle bitterly. After seeing the Eighth Heaven, they understood the grand splendor it represented. They already knew that they were all destined to fall by one spot in the rankings.

Step by step, Meng Hao was on the verge of creating... a shocking legend within the Vast Expanse School!

And that legend hinged on... the Ninth Heaven!

If Meng Hao pulled it off, and the Ninth Heaven appeared, then all of the nine sects in the Vast Expanse School would ring their bells to fill Planet Vast Expanse with the sound of their tolling.

That was... the most supreme of honors!

Chapter 1463: Seal the Heavens Hex!

At the same time that the crowds in the Ninth Sect were in an excited uproar, clouds began to gather in the sky up above. Soon, everything was covered over by the thick, black clouds.

Because of the brilliant light being cast out by the eight Heavens, it was initially difficult to spot them. However, the most powerful experts among the cultivators could sense an intense pressure building up in Heaven and Earth.

Soon, that sensation grew more obvious, and people began to look up. That was when their expressions began to flicker.

“That’s... Lightning Tribulation!”

“What kind of Tribulation is that? It’s so huge....”

“It makes me think of the Immortal Tribulation Elder Brother Fang Mu went through back then. I wonder if this Tribulation Lightning... is here for him?” Shocked cries could be heard as the black cloud layers rapidly grew thicker and larger. In the blink of an eye, they had covered the entire Ninth Sect, and were growing larger by the moment.

Yan’er hadn’t been there to watch her Master’s Immortal Tribulation, but she was shaken nonetheless. Not only could she overhear the conversations of the people around her, she could also sense that the clouds contained a terrifying aura of some sort.

The Dao Realm experts, the Dao Lords, Dao Sovereigns, and even the 7-Essences Paragon, all looked on with very serious expressions. If the current situation had begun to play out before the appearance of the Eighth Heaven, they wouldn’t have paid it much heed. Fang Mu’s life or death would have been up to fate.

But now, with the Eighth Heaven there shining brightly, Fang Mu’s status and importance far exceeded what they had before. He was no longer just an Inner Sect disciple of one of the subdivisions. He had the potential to become the Legacy disciple of the entire Ninth Sect. He was

on the verge of establishing an unheard-of legend within the Vast Expanse School, and was also about to send the Ninth Sect rocketing to fame.

The Dao Realm experts, the Dao Lords and Dao Sovereigns, and even the reclusive 7-Essences Paragon, would not be willing to allow Tribulation Lightning to interfere with a disciple like that.

The 7-Essences Paragon snorted and shot forward, followed by the Dao Sovereigns. The Dao Lords and other Dao Realm experts also flew out. This rather large group of powerful experts all unleashed their cultivation base power; shockingly, they were attempting to help Meng Hao disperse the Tribulation Lightning.

Black clouds seethed, and lightning bolts began to fall. Even as they shot toward the Vast Expanse Shrine, the 7-Essences Paragon waved his sleeve to disperse them.

The Tribulation seemed enraged, and in the blink of an eye, hundreds of bolts of lightning began to descend. Then thousands. They were like a lake of lightning spreading out in all directions.

Meanwhile, back in the Vast Expanse Shrine, Meng Hao was speeding along into the ninth level. As soon as he entered, he looked around to find himself surrounded by countless stone steles of varying sizes. All of them were inscribed with lines of text and magical symbols.

On the first stone stele he examined closely, he found a complete magical technique. Upon further inspection of the level, he found that the stone steles here were covered with numerous types of magic, over a million in total. Furthermore, there in front of Meng Hao was one particular stone stele which was completely blank.

There was no need to spend time in thought. Meng Hao instantly understood what this ninth level tested. It tested... creativity!

The requirement was to create a divine ability or magical technique, and inscribe it onto the blank stone stele. Based on the power of that magic, one would be assigned a rank in the ninth level.

As Meng Hao's divine sense spread out, the Immortal Soul Lamps began

to ignite inside of him. Both in terms of the number of lamps, and the process with which they appeared, they were completely different than the Soul Lamps his true self had possessed.

As that occurred, his cultivation base rose. Taking a deep breath, Meng Hao sent his divine sense into the surrounding stone steles, examining them and seeking enlightenment. After a moment, his heart trembled.

“Creating a divine ability wouldn’t be difficult at all for me. However, nothing I created would be very useful. It would be better to use this place to perfect... the Seal the Heavens Hex!” His eyes glittered as he sat down cross-legged. After closing his eyes, he once again sent his divine sense out into the surrounding stone steles to seek enlightenment of the various techniques therein, and using bits of what he learned to add to the Seal the Heavens Hex.

As that happened, the Seal the Heavens Hex trembled and grew clearer, and at the same time, became more complicated and resplendent. As he continued to seek enlightenment and perform augury calculations, the Seal the Heavens Hex reached greater heights of perfection.

Gradually, an intense aura began to emanate out from him, a powerful aura that could shake Heaven and Earth. It was aggressive, so much so that it seemed capable of sealing the Heavens!

Incomparably domineering!

Despite being wrapped up in seeking enlightenment, he was somewhat able to detect the lightning outside of the Vast Expanse Shrine. Shockingly, there were now tens of thousands of bolts of Tribulation Lighting exploding out to rock Heaven and Earth, and yet, they were summarily blasted away by the 7-Essences Paragon and the others.

Something like a bellow of rage could be heard from within the black clouds as more than a hundred million lightning bolts shot down. It was like an explosion of lightning that caused the faces of the onlookers to flicker with shock.

Within the Vast Expanse Shrine, Meng Hao shuddered slightly. As his enlightenment progressed, the Seal the Heavens Hex grew more complete.

It was now more complex than before, and at the same time, more perfect.

It was at this point that Meng Hao suddenly realized that although his original attempt at the Ninth Hex had been interfered with by Allheaven, the truth was that what he had thought to be the perfect version of the Hex at that time was actually not so perfect.

Now, with the constant additions and adjustments he was making, a perfect version of the Seal the Heavens Hex was taking shape that was completely different from the previous one.

It was impossible to say how much time passed, but soon, rumbling sounds filled Meng Hao as the sealing mark of the Seal the Heavens Hex finally reached a state of perfection. However, it was only an outline, not complete. Just when Meng Hao assumed that this would be enough, he suddenly saw lines spreading out within the outline. Unexpectedly... something else was forming inside of him... a second version of the Seal the Heavens Hex!

This sudden development left Meng Hao shaken. He once again sought enlightenment, focusing fully on the Seal the Heavens Hex. By drawing upon the more than one million perfect techniques around him, he was quickly able to identify the full shape of the sealing mark of the second Seal the Heavens Hex.

Although the shape seemed the same as before, there were certain tiny details that were different. Apparently... one sealing mark was not enough to complete the perfect version. Two were required! But then he realized that two was actually not enough, as... a third appeared!

Next was a fourth, a fifth, a sixth.... Meng Hao's mind was reeling, and excitement flooded him as he watched the Seal the Heavens Hex continuously transforming and rising to a higher level!

When the seventh version appeared, Meng Hao assumed it would be enough. But then came the eighth, and finally the ninth. Meng Hao's mind was spinning, and he was panting as he looked at the nine outlines of sealing marks.

Those nine sealing marks were the Seal the Heavens Hex!

Meng Hao's eyes snapped open, and he took a deep breath. He looked at the blank stone stele, eyes glittering, then raised his hand and placed the first sealing mark down upon it.

The stone stele trembled, and radiant light erupted out. From the feeling it gave off, it seemed like the absolute pinnacle.

Meng Hao stared in shock. He had only placed one of the nine sealing marks onto the stone stele, and yet the ninth level... had seemingly reached the pinnacle.

Meng Hao suddenly sensed a Paragon aura, and gasped.

"Paragon magic...." he murmured. "These sealing marks are a Paragon magic!"

After a moment of thought, he performed a double-handed incantation gesture. Without a moment of hesitation, he used divine will to send the second sealing mark onto the stone stele, which caused it to tremble violently.

Within that trembling, Meng Hao could clearly see that the two sealing marks were fusing together, and that the will of a Paragon was growing more intense. A boom echoed out as an incredibly powerful aura erupted out from the stone stele.

It felt like divine ability that was even more like a Paragon magic than before!

As the divine ability appeared, there was a huge crash as the million surrounding stone steles began to crack. Then, to Meng Hao's wide-eyed shock, all of them exploded!

It was as if they had destroyed themselves.

Apparently... in the face of such a matchless divine ability, all of the other divine abilities and magical techniques initiated self-destruction rather than remain in its presence!

Furthermore... that was only the fusion of two of the sealing marks. Looking excitedly at the stone stele, Meng Hao sent more divine will into

the palm of his hand, then reached out and placed the third sealing mark onto the stone stele.

In that instant, it fused with the others, whereupon a terrifying aura exploded out that would strike fear into the heart of anyone who felt it.

That aura contained a sensation of deadly crisis, an indescribably terrifying power that the stone stele simply couldn't handle. A boom could be heard as the only remaining stone stele... cracked, and then exploded!

It couldn't withstand the power of a mere three fused sealing marks!

One sealing mark made a Paragon magic!

Two sealing marks destroyed millions of stone steles!

Three sealing marks were so majestic that the testing stone steles of the ninth level couldn't handle it and exploded!

Meng Hao shot to his feet, trembling, his eyes flickering with excitement. Then he threw his head back and laughed uproariously.

"I can't fully unleash it now, and can only make imprints with divine will, even still... when I combine those nine sealing marks into one, then the Ninth Hex will appear, and I will be able to fully utilize it!" He finally had his direction, and knew what to do. He had to fill in the outlines of all nine sealing marks.

As of this moment, his foray into the Vast Expanse Shrine had resulted in unprecedented gains.

At the same time that he rose to his feet, the ninth level of the Vast Expanse Shrine erupted with dazzling light that was instantly visible on the outside. Everyone could see that above the Eighth Heaven was... the Ninth Heaven!!

Nine Heavens astonished and shocked everything in the world!

A bell began to toll which was profoundly more ancient and sonorous than anything from before. At the same time, in the Eighth Sect on the eighth continent, another shocking toll could be heard!

The cultivators there were still reeling from the events involving Meng

Hao shortly before, and when they heard the sound of the bells, their jaws dropped.

Simultaneously, in the Seventh, Sixth, Fifth, Fourth, Third, Second... and First Sects, in all of the nine sects of the Vast Expanse School, the sound of ancient tolling bells could be heard. Nine bells rang out, filling the Vast Expanse School, and also Planet Vast Expanse!

The hearts of countless cultivators were shaken, and numerous powerful experts were astonished. Everyone was wondering what exactly was happening.

Soon, that shocking bell toll swept out to fill even the most remote corners of the Vast Expanse School....

Chapter 1464: Tolling in Nine Sects!

As of this moment, all nine of the Vast Expanse School sects on Planet Vast Expanse were echoing with the tolling of bells. All cultivators in the Vast Expanse School were completely shaken, and in fact, even cultivators who weren't disciples, but happened to be visiting Planet Vast Expanse, could hear the ancient and sonorous toll.

"What's happening!?"

"Wait a second... bells are tolling in the Vast Expanse School, and they sound very serious. There's something extraordinary happening...."

As Planet Vast Expanse was shaken, there were still only a few people who had realized that the tolling of the bells was actually coming from all nine of the great sects that made up the Vast Expanse School.

But then, an ice-cold and completely emotionless voice spoke out to fill the First Sect, the Second Sect... and in fact, all of the sects, all the way to the Ninth Sect. The entire Vast Expanse School was filled with the same voice!

"Ninth Sect. Fang Mu. Ninth Heaven!"

Only six words were spoken!

However, those six words were like an enormous, invisible hand pushing down onto the Vast Expanse School from above. All of the nine sects seemed as quiet as death.

After a few breaths of time passed, just when it seemed the crowds couldn't be more suppressed by the pressure, a huge commotion rose up, a clamor, a hubbub that filled the entire Vast Expanse School.

"Fang Mu! Fang Mu from the Ninth Sect! I can't believe he summoned the Ninth Heaven. How.. how is that even possible!?"

"Maybe there was a mistake. Nobody can really summon the Ninth Heaven. What an absurd notion!"

"How could there be a mistake? Bells are ringing in all nine sects! Fang

Mu... I remember him! He was the guy who went from mortal to Immortal in ten years!" The sound of conversations formed a roar that caused the entire planet to tremble.

The Ninth Heaven.... that was something miraculous that, in the entire history of the Vast Expanse School, had only been seen once before!

Countless people were shaken. It was in this way that the name Fang Mu instantly came to be heard by all of the disciples of the Vast Expanse School. Then, the profound shock they felt increased as they suddenly realized... that the tolling of the bells could actually be heard everywhere on Planet Vast Expanse!

"The bells are ringing in all nine sects, filling all of Planet Vast Expanse!" This fact led to widespread gasping and shock. Perhaps better ways existed to make one's name known to all, but... for now, Meng Hao's method was completely unprecedented.

In one brief instant, the name 'Fang Mu' came to be fixed in all minds.

Regardless of the level of cultivation base involved, Dao Realm experts, Dao Lords, Dao Sovereigns, and even Paragons, everyone on Planet Vast Expanse had eyes wide with shock.

It would be impossible not to be moved, all because of... the Ninth Heaven!

Throughout the history of the sect, there had only ever been one person who had summoned the Ninth Heaven, but now... there were two.

At the moment, numerous streams of divine sense were pouring out from within the First Sect. On the Holy Mountain there was an Immortal's cave, to door of which opened to reveal a handsome young man clad in a long robe. He had a unique air about him, and as he silently walked out, he looked in the direction of the Ninth Sect, his eyes glowing brightly.

He was a Chosen, and within the First Sect, he held a rank that put him on equal footing with their Holy Daughter... He was the First Sect's Holy Son. He also held the 1st place spot on the First Sect's Vast Expanse Shrine. In all of the sects, people who were in the top 10 were extremely

prominent individuals.

It was the same in the Second Sect; a powerful roar could be heard as a pillar of water erupted from a deep, icy pool. It propelled a burly, bare-chested man up into the air, whose expression was both grave and defiant.

“Fang Mu....” he said, looking in the direction of the Ninth Sect.

In the Third, Fourth, Fifth... all the way to the Eighth Sect, none of the Chosen were very pleased about what was happening. That was especially true of the various Chosen who were in the top 10; all of them now had the name ‘Fang Mu’ fixed firmly in their minds. Not only were they unwilling to accept him, they also wanted to fight him.

They were Chosen, like prize jewels of the sect. They had access to cultivation resources that others would find difficult to even imagine. Although they might not have started out as proud and arrogant people, after reaching this point, they could pass up their contemporaries as easily as flipping over a hand. Soon, they were so far ahead that when they looked back, they couldn’t see anyone following in their path. They were the people who others looked up to.

They were as lonely as eagles, soaring in the Heavens. Beneath them were mere common birds who flitted around beneath the very clouds they soared above.

It was a lonely existence in which the only people worthy of their gazes were the other eagle-like Chosen who were their peers.

If you likened such people to eagles, then, as of this moment, it was as if a roc had appeared. The pressure weighing down on them now was something they couldn’t accept, and filled them with the desire to fight.

A gale force wind was blowing through the Vast Expanse School, throwing the sects into an uproar, and causing surges of energy to appear as various Chosen powered up.

Even Han Bei appeared. As she hovered there in the air, listening to the tolling of the bells, she could sense the uproar in the First Sect, and could see other cultivators flying out in shock. Everyone, it seemed, was

subconsciously turning to look in one direction.

The ninth continent, and the Ninth Sect.

At the moment, Han Bei was perhaps the calmest person on all of Planet Vast Expanse. It was as if she weren't surprised at all to hear the name 'Fang Mu'.

"He's basically a 9-Essences Paragon, bullying some kids. How amusing." She snorted coldly, and yet, was still suspicious of what exactly Meng Hao was doing with his clone. She had the feeling that there was some important plan being carried out.

While the other eight sects were thrown into an uproar, the Ninth Sect was equally filled with astonishment. As that cold and shocking voice echoed out, expressions of zealous veneration appeared on their faces, as well as delight and excitement.

"Eldest Brother Fang Mu!" It was hard to say who called it out first, but soon, the cry became a huge roar that exploded out into the air.

"Eldest Brother Fang Mu!!"

"Eldest Brother Fang Mu!!!"

The title of Eldest Brother was usually used to indicate seniority within a group. But in this case, it represented the approval and acclaim of all disciples within the Ninth Sect.

The only one who wasn't saying it was Yan'er. Her eyes went wide as she suddenly realized she had a seemingly innumerable amount of Sect Uncles now....

The Vast Expanse Shrine of the Ninth Sect radiated the scintillating light of the Ninth Heaven. The black clouds up in the sky churned, and something like a Heavenly howl of anger echoed from within them. More lightning built up, and yet the 7-Essences Paragon simply laughed and led the rest of the powerful experts to help Meng Hao counter the Tribulation Lightning.

"Fang Mu," he said loudly, "don't disappoint me. Go all out and see... if

you can summon the Tenth Heaven for the Ninth Sect!”

In response to his words, a collective gasp could be heard from the cultivators in the Ninth Sect. Then, brilliant gleams began to shine in the eyes of one and all.

The Ninth Heaven was not completely unheard-of, nor was it something that was impossible to surpass. In sharp contrast was... the Tenth Heaven. If someone could summon the Tenth Heaven, then the only thing that could happen in the future would be that others might catch up. However, no one... would be able to surpass that person’s achievement.

It was a glory which would last for tens upon tens of thousands of years, and would always remain within the Ninth Sect!

“The Tenth Heaven.... Eldest Brother Fang Mu, summon the Tenth Heaven!”

“Eldest Brother, get that Tenth Heaven!!”

As the crowds called out, Yan’er also shouted, “Master, summon the Tenth Heaven....”

The Chosen from Ninth Sect, even the one who held the 1st place spot on the stone stele but was already prepared to lose it, were moved. Burying their emotions, they sighed, and soon gleams of light appeared in their eyes.

If you are a roc, then please don’t bully us eagles. Go bully the other birds of prey.... That is what the current 1st place holder was thinking, and similar thoughts were running through the minds of the other Chosen.

Back on the ninth level of the Vast Expanse Shrine, the thought of bullying the so-called eagles hadn’t even crossed Meng Hao’s mind. He was very interested in this Vast Expanse Shrine. Waving his sleeve, he cleared the rubble from the ninth level, causing the entrance to the tenth level to appear.

Without the slightest hesitation, he proceeded forward to the tenth level... the highest level of the Vast Expanse Shrine.

Almost as soon as he set foot there, a strange expression appeared on his face. He was suddenly struck with the feeling that... he really was bullying children.

The test of the tenth level consisted of nothing more than a wall, which pulsed with shocking magical ripples.

Visible there was a list of ten names, which were the Chosen who had taken 1st through 10th place in this Vast Expanse Shrine.

After each name was a number. Behind the 1st place name was a number a bit higher than 70,000. Subsequent numbers got smaller and smaller, until the 10th place, which had a number at around 40,000.

From what Meng Hao could tell, the ninth and tenth levels of the Vast Expanse Shrine were complimentary. On the ninth level, the disciple would create a divine ability, and on the tenth level, the specific strength of said magic would be assessed. The result would be a number; the higher the number, the more powerful the divine ability, and the higher the ranking.

However... the stone stele in the ninth level had already exploded.... Granted, that stone stele wasn't designed to measure the strength of the divine ability, but it was intended to help the disciple refine the divine ability, and make it more complete. Unfortunately, that stone stele... was gone.

When the Vast Expanse School had created the Vast Expanse Shrine, no one could have imagined that someone would create a divine ability that would actually cause the stone stele on the ninth level to explode. Compared to a divine ability like that, this tenth level would be about as powerful as a pile of chicken ribs.

"Well, I'll give it a shot," thought Meng Hao. "Since this is a special stone stele for testing the power of divine abilities, maybe it won't explode like the last one." After a moment of hesitation, his eyes began to shine, and he reached out. The nine sealing marks of the Seal the Heavens Hex began to shine brightly inside of him as he pointed his finger at the wall.

Chapter 1465: Completely Brazen!

The first sealing mark of the Ninth Hex emerged. Although it was only an outline, and illusory, it was complete.

You could even say that the sealing mark was comprised mostly of Meng Hao's divine will, which was currently the only way he could unleash it.

The flickering sealing mark instantly appeared on the surface of the wall.

Almost immediately, the wall began to vibrate, and a rumbling sound emanated out.

The name Fang Mu appeared, and it immediately took the 1st place spot, shoving all the other names downward. Next to it was a number slightly higher than 30,000,000....

It was a number hundreds of times larger than the original 1st place spot holder, a number which could shake Heaven and Earth!!

Meng Hao didn't really care about the name or the number. However, he could sense that the wall was apparently capable of accepting more than one of the sealing marks. He quickly performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, then pushed it down onto the wall. The second sealing mark flew out, and once again the wall shook. Intense rumbling sounds echoed out, and it took even longer this time for things to quiet down.

When that happened, the number next to Fang Mu's name... went in the briefest of instants from more than 30,000,000... to the shocking number of 300,000,000!

The terrifying level of that number so vastly exceeded that of the previous number that to speak it out loud would cause even a Paragon to gasp in shock.

According to the rules of the Vast Expanse Shrine, 100,000 indicated that the divine ability was powerful enough to use on Dao Realm experts. 1,000,000 was the threshold for Dao Lords, and 10,000,000 for Dao Sovereigns. 100,000,000 was for 7-Essences Paragons. 1,000,000,000 was

for 8-Essences, and as for 9-Essences... the number was 10,000,000,000 and higher.

This wall had revealed the divine ability's final level of power, which had nothing to do with one's cultivation base. Therefore, it was possible to tell that the combined two sealing marks of Meng Hao's Hexing magic was powerful enough to shake 7-Essences Paragons.

The terrifying level of that power was something that left even Meng Hao shaken, and caused a gleam of focus to appear in his eyes. As of this point, he was certain that his current Seal the Heavens Hex was definitely incredibly powerful.

Eyes glittering, he once again placed his hand onto the wall. Using his divine will, he placed the third, fourth, and fifth sealing marks down.

When the third sealing mark fused into the wall, the wall stayed whole, and the number next to Fang Mu's name rocketed up, reaching 1,000,000,000, then 2,000,000,000 and finally 3,000,000,000. That meant that three of the sealing marks together could shake an 8-Essences Paragon.

When the fourth sealing mark fused with the others, the wall shook so hard that cracks began to spread out over its surface, which almost immediately tried to close up. The number next to Fang Mu's name changed again, reaching an astonishing level. It went from 3,000,000,000 all the way to 10,000,000,000, then 20,000,000,000. It didn't stop at 30,000,000,000, but actually kept going all the way to 60,000,000,000!!

That incredible number resulting from the fusion of four of the sealing marks, 60,000,000,000 indicated that the divine ability could kill half of all 9-Essences Paragons!

And that... was only the combination of four sealing marks!

Next... the fifth sealing mark appeared, and more cracks spread out across the surface of the wall. A boom rang out as the wall reached its limit and exploded!

Just before it completely fell apart, Meng Hao was able to see that the

number next to the name Fang Mu had broken past 100,000,000,000, and was continuing to climb. However, he wasn't able to glimpse the final result, as the wall collapsed.

His jaw dropped, and he couldn't help but inhale sharply. He lifted his hand and looked at it, and then a bright glow appeared in his eyes.

"Five Seal the Heavens Hex marks combined is enough to kill... a 9-Essences Paragon, even someone at the peak!" Meng Hao took a deep breath, his eyes shining brightly as his heart filled with the anticipation of seeing the final version of the Ninth Hex.

It was in this same moment that the wall collapsed, in which massive rumbling sounds echoed out, accompanied by brilliant light. The tenth level of the tower that was the Vast Expanse Shrine began to emit the dazzling light of... the Tenth Heaven!

Throughout the entire history of the Vast Expanse School, only one person had ever summoned the Ninth Heaven. Now, Meng Hao was the first to summon the Tenth! It was... completely unprecedented!

On this day, the first tolling of bells throughout the entire Vast Expanse School was because of the Ninth Heaven. The sound of those bells had just faded away, and no one had recovered from what would be a conversation topic in the cultivation world for many years to come.

And yet, it was at that point... that bells began to toll again. From the First, Second, Third... all the way to the Ninth Sect.

"What? Why are there bells tolling again?"

"Is that just an echo? I... I think I'm hearing things."

"What's... what's happening now!?!?" As the bells rang, the disciples in the First through Eighth Sects looked around in shock as, yet again, a cold, emotionless voice spoke out.

"Ninth Sect. Fang Mu. Tenth Heaven!"

Everyone was flabbergasted, including the supposed eagle-like Chosen, the powerful experts in the Dao Realm, and the Dao Lords and Dao

Sovereigns.

For a moment, complete silence filled the Vast Expanse School, but then a massive commotion broke out in which virtually everyone was shouting out in disbelief and shock.

“Impossible! This is completely impossible!!”

“The Tenth Heaven! How could it be? That’s the Tenth Heaven.... The Ninth Heaven just appeared! How could Fang Mu possibly have summoned the Tenth Heaven?! This... this is the making of a legend, the forging of a myth!”

“Cheater! He definitely cheated! Dammit, there’s something wrong here!” Numerous cries filled the entire Vast Expanse School, causing everything to tremble.

Most people either couldn’t believe it, or didn’t want to. The faces of the Chosen were ashen. The blow which they had just received was difficult to put into words.

Even the Paragons were shaken. The faces of the 7-Essences and 8-Essences Paragons flickered, and at the same time, the meditating 9-Essences Paragons opened their eyes.

It was impossible for even figures such as them to ignore what was happening. The Ninth Heaven was a major event, but the Tenth Heaven... was a pinnacle that no one had ever reached before.

When a disciple like that appeared in a sect, even 9-Essences Paragons had to pay attention.

The Sect Leader was the first to send his divine will out. It only took a moment for his suspicions to be aroused, and after various speculations, a wry expression appeared on his face, and he looked away.

Golden-robed Jin Yunshan and Sha Jiudong both looked similarly suspicious; their uncertainty gave them a bit of pause.

They were the only ones who picked up on the clues. All of the other 9-Essences Paragons were extremely interested about this Chosen named

Fang Mu.

However, they then recalled that the Ninth Sect was run by the inhuman Ninth Paragon, and they looked away, no longer the least bit interested in Fang Mu.

Or perhaps it would be more accurate to say that they didn't dare to be interested.

The Vast Expanse School was even more excited than it had been before. The name Fang Mu was now a legend. Within the Ninth Sect, people were calling out loudly, even Yan'er.

Even as the excited cries echoed out, Meng Hao appeared at the top of the Vast Expanse Shrine. The tenth level was over, and he had become the first person in the Vast Expanse School to ever summon the Tenth Heaven. Now, he even appeared to be standing atop that very Tenth Heaven.

He looked like an Immortal being, his garments rippling, his hair floating around him. Then he looked up into the sky, and the roiling, churning black clouds.

At that point, the Ten Heavens began to fade from the Vast Expanse Shrine. It started with the First Heaven, which became a beam of light that shot up and entered Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's mind trembled, and as the beam of light entered him, he could sense it converging on the first of the nine sealing marks.

"Is this good fortune from the Vast Expanse Shrine?" he wondered to himself. "An additional bonus after the conclusion...?" At the same time, the Second, Third, and Fourth Heavens... also vanished, becoming beams of light that shot toward Meng Hao.

As they fused into him, he got more excited; the first sealing mark was rapidly becoming more solid. Then the Ninth and Tenth Heavens faded and shot into him, filling him with rumbling sounds.

In the end, he took a deep breath, and his eyes shone with delight. The first of the nine sealing marks was now thirty percent complete!!

Before he could spend much more time observing it, lightning bolts began to appear in the black clouds up above.

100. 1,000. 10,000!

Boundless Tribulation Lightning began to fall toward Meng Hao, filled with death and destruction. The 7-Essences Paragon and the others ceased to offer assistance. After all, since the lightning was clearly there just for Meng Hao, then he would need to face it alone.

As they fell back, Meng Hao's eyes gleamed with brilliant light. As the disciples of the Ninth Sect all watched, rumbling sounds echoed out, and Meng Hao flew up into the air above the Vast Expanse Shrine, taking the initiative... to attack the Tribulation Lightning!

He flew up into the sky, fearless, laughing coldly, a gleam of disdain visible in his eyes. He clearly wanted to fight.

When the countless disciples down below saw that, they began to cheer loudly. It was an image that would be forever imprinted on their souls.

To the Chosen, Meng Hao was being extremely domineering, acting in a completely and utterly brazen fashion.

Chapter 1466: Who Else?

Shocking rumbling sounds could be heard as Meng Hao slammed into over 10,000 Tribulation Lightning bolts. He flicked his sleeve, unleashing the explosive power of his cultivation base. It wasn't the power of the Immortal Realm, but the Ancient Realm. Dots of light could be seen all over his body, which made him shine brightly.

Massive booms could be heard as the 10,000 lightning bolts were destroyed. Meng Hao's garments and hair fluttered, and as he looked at the black clouds, he took a step upward.

In response to that step, the clouds rumbled, and tens of thousands of lightning bolts fell, transforming into a lake of lighting that enveloped him. He snorted coldly, performing a double-handed incantation gesture and then waving both hands out.

RUUUUUUMMMMBLLLLLE!

All of the lightning was destroyed. Then the black clouds churned, as a roar of rage echoed out from inside. 100,000 lightning bolts began to fall, seemingly endlessly, as if the Heavens were infuriated. After the 100,000 lightning bolts were destroyed, another 100,000 came. Then another.

It seemed as if the lightning would never end, as if the Tribulation wouldn't stop until Meng Hao was dead.

Meng Hao's eyes flickered as he performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, causing boundless mist to build up around him, which was a divine ability he had picked up from the Vast Expanse School. He extended his right hand, and the mist rapidly transformed into streams of smoke which shot out to meet the incoming Tribulation Lightning. Booms could be heard as they all exploded.

The sound was shocking. It was as if in all creation, the only thing that existed were the Heavens and Meng Hao!

One man was personally fighting the Heavens!

Everyone present was completely shaken, and the Dao Realm experts

were clearly moved.

Another 100,000 lightning bolts collapsed, and behind them came yet another 100,000. It was then that Meng Hao's laughter began to echo out. His hands flashed in a double-handed incantation gesture as he stepped forward again, energy surging in spectacular fashion.

"I'm seeking enlightenment of what it means to seal the Heavens, in order to complete the Ninth Hex. If I can't seal some Tribulation Lightning, then how could I possibly strive to seal the Heavens!" Laughing, he took another step forward, raised his hands up and pushed them toward the Heavens.

The aura of the Ancient Realm erupted out, and countless shining lights appeared. Heaven shook and the Earth quaked as he fought against one round of 100,000 lightning bolts after another.

Booms rang out constantly as the lightning collapsed. At the same time, Meng Hao remained in place in mid-air, clearly visible to everyone down below. The crowds were shaken by this sight of someone actually fighting the Heavens.

Meng Hao flicked his sleeve, glaring at the clouds as he said, "Bring it on! Let's see how many lightning bolts you can send against Fang Mu this time!"

Only someone with profound character... could say something like that!

Countless gasps of shock could be heard from the crowd down below. It was an intense image that was burned into their minds: Fang Mu standing there, facing off against the endlessly seething black clouds and crackling lightning.

Anyone who saw such a scene couldn't help but gasp in astonishment.

The Chosen had already forgotten about how they didn't want to accept Fang Mu. Their eyes were shining brightly because of his brazen attitude, his domineering nature, and the heroic and shocking way he fought against the Heavens.

"Fang Mu!"

“Fang Mu!!”

“Fang Mu!!!” It was impossible to say who began to shout it first. But soon, all of the Chosen, and all of the other male cultivators in the Ninth Sect, could sense Meng Hao’s heroic nature. It was a madness that could fight against the Heavens, and it left them shaken, eyes bloodshot, roaring at the tops of their lungs.

Their voices became a sound wave that shook Heaven and Earth, causing everything to tremble, as though energy itself were erupting from their mouths.

The Dao Realm experts were all moved. They looked at the disciples, and then looked at Meng Hao, their expressions filled with excitement.

Morale and spirit are extremely important in a sect, and as of this moment... a seed of valor seemed to have been planted in the hearts of all the disciples.

And it was all because of Meng Hao. He had successfully captured the hearts of all of the disciples of the Ninth Sect. Not only were they crying out to him as Eldest Brother, but their hearts were also brimming with ardor and reverence for him.

At the same time, the surrounding female disciples were looking at Fang Mu with unprecedented glows in their eyes. To see him fighting the Heavens had imprinted his image onto their hearts for all eternity.

It was the same kind of look that the female disciples had given Wang Tengfei back in the days of the Reliance Sect, or the looks that the female alchemists had given to Chosen in the Violet Fate Sect. It was the exact same look given to Meng Hao in the various sects in which he had become a legend, a Dao Child among Chosen!

The female disciples gazed at Meng Hao with adoration and envy; they were attracted to him in a way that far exceeded the passions of the male cultivators.

It took only a moment for all of the disciples of the Ninth Sect to be whipped into an unheard-of frenzy, all thanks to the sight of Meng Hao

fighting the Heavens, viciously battling the lightning, and everything else.

Yan'er stood there in the crowd, and was suddenly not very happy. She felt a sensation of crisis, something extremely, profoundly intense.... She was excited just like everyone else, but her young heart was also filled with a secret joy because of Meng Hao; somehow, he had become everything to her. Then she realized how everyone was looking at him, and she suddenly felt as if they were having aspirations regarding something that belonged to her.

“Hmph,” she thought, gritting her teeth. “There’s only one of that old man. What do you people think you’re doing? Trying to steal him? He’s my Master. MINE!”

The emotions of the Ninth Sect’s disciples bubbled over, as if they had been lit with flame. Meanwhile, the clouds churned, and more lightning formed, this time, not 100,000 bolts, but instead, more than 1,000,000.

1,000,000 lightning bolts began to fall, a shocking spectacle difficult to put into words. As they fell, they resembled, not a lake of lightning, but rather, an enormous hand!

It was a huge hand composed of lightning, emanating crashing booms as it descended toward Meng Hao. A sensation of imminent crisis rose up within him, and his eyes began to shine brightly. He threw his head back and roared, throwing both hands up into the air, causing numerous dots of light to appear.

10. 30. 50. 80... 108! 1

The 108 major qi meridians on his body were all shining brilliantly. Shockingly, within each of those 108 qi meridians, it was possible to see an image.

Closer examination revealed that those figures were, astonishingly... Immortal Soul Lamps!!

108 meridians, 108 lamps!

It was a complete and shocking sight to everyone. This was the first time for Meng Hao’s clone to reveal how many Soul Lamps he had, and the

result was almost beyond belief.

In the blink of an eye, all 108 Soul Lamps were blazing with light, casting Meng Hao in complete brilliance. As the enormous palm fell, he harbored no thoughts of putting up a defense, or of evading. Instead... he attacked!

He was fighting the Heavens with an incisive will!

Meng Hao took the initiative to fly out, a blur of light that shot toward the enormous lightning hand. Everything shook violently, and all eyes were fixed upon the scene, filled with both nervousness and anticipation. To them, it was as if nothing else existed other than Meng Hao.

Time seemed to slow. Everyone watched as Meng Hao made contact with the hand. Then, time seemed to return to its normal speed, and even increased explosively.

Heaven and Earth trembled, and rumbling sounds echoed out. The hand, filled with endless destructive power, intent on wiping Meng Hao out of existence, collapsed into countless fragments. The light shining out of Meng Hao dimmed somewhat, but he laughed nonetheless.

“Bring it on!” he yelled, as brazen as ever, his hair whipping about.

Rumbling sounds emanated out from within the black clouds. The clouds suddenly shrank, converging in upon themselves, sending a terrifying pressure out to cover everything. The disciples of the Ninth Sect had just begun to feel relieved moments ago, but suddenly got nervous again.

Crackling sounds rang out as the shrunken clouds suddenly exploded with an insane rain of lightning. 100,000 bolts. 1,000,000. 2,000,000. 3,000,000. 5,000,000. 8,000,000!!

8,000,000 lightning bolts converged, seemingly covering the entire world. They descended like a downpour, and from a distance, they almost looked like... a huge finger!

Although it was simply an outline, the resemblance was striking!

Meng Hao’s pupils constricted as the finger closed in on him. Just when

his true self was preparing to converge some divine sense to send out in assistance, all of a sudden, a voice could be heard. It came from the group of Chosen down below; they had witnessed Meng Hao fighting the Heavens, and they could see how mismatched and unfair the battle was.

“Eldest Brother Fang, you’re fighting the Heavens alone! I hope you don’t mind if I, Sun Mou... join you in fighting the Tribulation Lighting!?” Even as the words rang out, a figure flew out from the crowd.

Almost simultaneously, more people began to call out.

“Eldest Brother Fang, count me, Liu Mu, in as well!”

“And me, Chen Ao!”

“How could I, Zhang Yunqi, possibly stay out of something like this!?”

“And me!”

“Eldest Brother, I, Cai Wei, will also join you!”

“Tribulation Lighting? Zheng Yuan will join you to fight it, Eldest Brother Fang!”

Countless individuals flew up, and innumerable voices cried out. There were men and women, all of whom flew up into the air.

1,000 disciples. 5,000. 30,000. 200,000. 1,000,000. 3,000,000... Soon, 10,000,000 disciples were up in the air, flying together!

The Dao Realm experts were shocked, and the Paragons gasped. In the blink of an eye, the 8,000,000 lightning bolts suddenly... lurched to a halt!

*

1. The number 108 is important in some Eastern religions.

Chapter 1467: Seven Sealing Marks Eradicate Tribulation!

It wouldn't be correct to say that all of the disciples in the Ninth Sect flew up to assist. But 10,000,000 was a huge number, all of whom flew up, causing Heaven and Earth to shake.

Their eyes burned with reverence and awe. Many of them were even ranked on the Vast Expanse Shrine. However, because of the Tenth Heaven, Meng Hao had thoroughly won them over, and his heroism in single-handedly fighting the Heavens had set their blood boiling.

As their voices rang out and they flew into the air, the world trembled. Meng Hao's clone looked at them, heart pounding, and a bit in a daze because of their cries.

His true self, who remained concealed nearby, was also taken aback, and felt his heart beginning to pound.

Their cries gave him a strange feeling. The truth was that before, he had never felt much of an attachment to Planet Vast Expanse. But now, thanks to the cries of the cultivators of the Ninth Sect, Meng Hao couldn't help but feel moved.

That feeling was like a seed planted in his heart, which almost immediately began to slowly grow. Meanwhile, the black clouds in the sky rumbled, and the enormous outline of the finger formed by the 8,000,000 lightning bolts seemed to seethe with rage as it descended once again.

This time, Meng Hao wasn't facing the Tribulation Lightning alone. 10,000,000 disciples of the Ninth Sect joined him, unleashing various divine abilities in a Heaven-defying display. Everything went dim, and the sky seemed to be on the verge of collapsing. The clouds layers roiled, and from a distance, it was possible to see that the truly shocking sight was not the 8,000,000 bolts of Tribulation Lightning, but rather, the 10,000,000 disciples!

RUUUUUUMMMMBLLLLLE!

It was an indescribably powerful offensive, a destructive attack that was difficult to put into words. Anyone who tried to illustrate it in a painting would find it very difficult. It was... completely astonishing!

It was Man versus the Heavens. The Heavens roared, and Man howled. Massive rumblings echoed out as the enormous lightning finger began to fall apart. Blood sprayed out of the mouths of the 10,000,000 disciples, transforming into a sea of blood. However, instead of falling to the ground, it shot up toward the lightning.

The intense booming sounds continued to echo out. So far, this battle with the Tribulation Lightning had lasted for over one hundred breaths of time. When the 8,000,000-lightning-bolt finger collapsed, the 10,000,000 disciples once again coughed up blood. All of them were injured, and staggered backward. However, their eyes shone with a spirit that had never before been seen therein.

Their auras were even more fierce and lively, their eyes flashing with clarity as if their understanding of the world were different now than it just had been.

It was a scene that was earth-topplingly shocking to the Dao Realm experts, Dao Lords, Dao Sovereigns and the 7-Essences Paragon. There were other 7-Essences Paragons who were rushing over, and when they personally laid eyes on what was happening, they gasped. How could they not tell that the energy of the entire Ninth Sect was now completely different than before!?

There was a vitality, a focus, an incisive power. There was the gall to fight the Heavens! Who said that only a single person could fight the Heavens!?

The Tribulation Lightning wasn't finished. Even as the 10,000,000 disciples fell back, the black clouds in the sky seethed once more. They shrunk again, but this time, to an exaggerated degree. In the blink of an eye, they were vastly smaller than before, only about 3,000 meters across.

However, as they shrunk, the pressure they exuded emanated out like numerous crushing mountains that could destroy all.

The disciples gritted their teeth and prepared to charge in attack once more. Before they could, Meng Hao leaped up ahead of them. Surprisingly, he completely ignored the lightning, and turned back to the countless cultivators. Taking a deep breath, his eyes flickered as he clasped hands and bowed deeply to them.

“I, Fang Mu, offer many thanks to you, Fellow Daoists. You’ve done enough by helping once. After all, this is my Tribulation.... Many thanks!” Without offering any other words, he clasped hands and bowed.

Even as the words left his mouth, the Heavens rumbled, and the 3,000 meter stretch of black clouds shrank down again. Soon, it was only 300 meters wide. Then 30. Then 3. In the end, it transformed into an ink-black needle!

It was pitch black, and filled with the power of all the darkness of the starry sky of the Vast Expanse. Almost immediately, it began to whistle through the air at incredible speed, and from the feeling it let off, it seemed more apparent than ever that it wouldn’t rest until Meng Hao was dead.

It moved so quickly that by the time Meng Hao turned his head, the Tribulation Lightning needle was right in front of his forehead.

His eyes flickered; it felt as if all of the Tribulation Lightning were contained in that black needle. It contained soul-destroying power, as well as a divine will of its own.

It was a divine will that contained myriads upon myriads of transformations; if it entered the body, those transformations would explode out, filling his sea of consciousness with infinite bolts of lightning. It would become a divine ability of Heavenly might that would destroy the body inside and out.

Although the lightning might be powerless to affect Meng Hao from the outside, now that the Tribulation Lightning had chosen to use divine will to pierce Meng Hao’s sea of consciousness, it was dangerously destructive.

Meng Hao’s eyes flickered. Had he not experienced everything in the Vast Expanse Shrine, his only option would have been to rely on the

strength of his true self to destroy the Tribulation Lightning.

But now, he had the outline of the nine sealing marks of the Seal the Heavens Hex inside of him. He couldn't unleash them outside his body, and was forced to let them brew inside of him via divine will. Right now, the Tribulation Lightning needle was about to stab into him and enter his sea of consciousness, to unleash its transformations of divine will.

However, to Meng Hao, with his terrifying Seal the Heavens Hex in nine parts, this Tribulation Lightning... was seeking its own destruction!

A cold smile appeared on his mouth, and he didn't even attempt to evade. He allowed the black needle to stab into his forehead, merging into him. It became countless streams of blackness that instantly poured through his body, converging onto his soul and his sea of consciousness. Then, it became a fog of black lightning that prepared to destroy him from the inside.

However, it was then that Meng Hao drew upon his divine will. Instantly, the first sealing mark of the Seal the Heavens Hex appeared, causing rumbling sounds to echo out as it faced off with the black lightning mist.

When they met, the black mist lurched to a halt, then exploded out with even more force than before. However, then the second sealing mark appeared, and the third. After that was the fourth.

They combined with the first sealing mark, utterly shaking the black mist. It began to dissipate, whereupon a roar of rage and disbelief echoed out. Meng Hao snorted coldly, and the fifth sealing mark appeared. It combined with the others to create a Heaven-shaking, Earth-shattering power that completely crushed the mist, dissipating it violently.

However, things weren't over. Neither the ninth nor the tenth levels of the Vast Expanse Shrine had been sufficient to solidify even one of the sealing marks. However, this Tribulation Lightning was the perfect subject to experiment with.

It had voluntarily entered his body, so it had opened the door, and there was no way Meng Hao would let it off the hook. His divine will rumbled as he unleashed the sixth sealing mark, combining it with the others. An

indescribable rage coursed through his body, wreaking complete havoc on the Tribulation Lightning, and causing the black mist to rapidly shrink down.

In the end, it transformed back into a needle, which then attempted to flee.

“You’re not going anywhere!” Meng Hao said with a cold harrumph. The seventh sealing mark appeared, merging with the others almost instantly.

When that happened, a world-shaking power rumbled out through him, along with an indescribable sealing power. In the blink of an eye, Meng Hao’s entire body became like a cage. The needle trembled, trying like mad to break free, but was blocked at every turn.

Next, the sealing power created by the fusion of that seventh sealing mark created something like a huge net, forcing the black needle into its confines. Soon, the net had covered the needle.

The needle shivered as though it wanted to struggle, and yet had no power to endure. The combined power of the seven sealing marks continued to weigh down onto it until it cracked, collapsed, and transformed into ash.

Meng Hao shivered and then opened his eyes. A flicker of lightning could be seen therein. Then he raised his right hand up, and countless bolts of lightning shot out from his palm toward the Heavens. The Heavens trembled, and sunlight spilled down; the aura of Tribulation had vanished.

This instance of Ancient Realm Tribulation had been overcome!

It was now evening, and Meng Hao hovered in midair bathed by the warm sunlight, making it look as if he had donned a set of saffron-colored armor. It was an image which would be eternally unforgettable to all of the disciples in the crowd.

“Eldest Brother Fang Mu!”

“Eldest Brother Fang Mu!!”

“Eldest Brother Fang Mu!!!” As the voices rang out, countless hands clasped in respect. The resulting sound wave echoed out in all directions, and was joined in by everyone, with the exception of the Dao Realm cultivators.

All eyes were filled with zealous ardor.

Yan’er was there in the crowd, her young heart shaken. She had never seen her Master like this, and for some reason, she found this version of him, bathed as he was in the evening sun, to be especially good-looking.

Meng Hao hovered there looking at the adoring masses, and he caught sight of Yan’er. After a moment passed, he looked back up into the Heavens, and a bright light flickered in his eyes.

This clone of his was now matured. What he needed to do now was get the clone into the Dao Realm, where he could use his explosive cultivation base power to complete all of the sealing marks of the Seal the Heavens Hex.

Seven days after Meng Hao’s clone gained fame and renown, shaking the entire Vast Expanse School, his true self received an excited divine will message from the Sect Leader.

“Ninth Paragon, everything is prepared. This time, it might be possible to... stay long-term in the necropolis!”

Chapter 1468: I'm Here for the Copper Mirror!

As soon as Meng Hao's true self heard the words, he looked up, and his eyes gleamed with determination. Then, he rose to his feet.

His anticipation regarding this trip into the necropolis could not have been greater. This time, his goal was not the Transcendence Dais, but rather, that location he had glimpsed upon leaving last time, where the shard of the copper mirror had landed.

"The third land mass...." he said. Taking a deep breath, he flicked his sleeve, vanishing from within the Ninth Paragon City.

When he reappeared, he was up in the starry sky of the half planet, heading toward the spell formation that led to the necropolis.

Even as he arrived, the air distorted as other figures appeared. The other 9-Essences Paragons could be seen, as well as the golden-robed Jin Yunshan, and Sha Jiudong.

Although there had been no previous agreement regarding the matter, no one brought subordinates this time. They had been brought along last time to fill out the vanguard position as they made their way to the continent. But now that everyone was sure of the way to go, and had been preparing for dozens of years, they were all confident in their ability to make their way alone.

The group hadn't laid eyes on each other for dozens of years. After returning to the sect all those years ago, each one had gone into secluded meditation. Now, they looked around, measuring each other up, assessing each other's cultivation bases, checking to see how much progress they had made.

Everyone treated Meng Hao very respectfully. This being their second time inside, his importance to the group, and his invincibility inside the necropolis, ensured that none of the other 9-Essences Paragons were willing to provoke him.

As for Jin Yunshan, he would never be able to forget the events which had occurred. Along with Sha Jiudong, he avoided standing in front of Meng Hao at all times.

Seeing that everyone was assembled, Shangguan Hong asked, "Sect Leader, earlier you said that we could stay 'long term' within the necropolis. What did you mean by that?"

Others quickly added follow-up questions.

"Yes, please clear this matter up, Sect Leader!"

"What does 'long term' mean? Could it be that you have a way to deal with the doomsday events which unfold inside?"

Even Sha Jiudong and Jin Yunshan were waiting to hear the Sect Leader's response.

Meng Hao was just as interested. After all, the Transcendence might be helpful to the others, but to him, it was of little use, at least not at the moment.

He still needed his clone to finish forming the Ninth Hex, and then merge back into him. At that time, he would be able to take advantage of the aura of the Transcendence Dais, combine the Nine Hexes, and gather the power to extinguish the bronze lamp.

Before then, he didn't care much at all about the necropolis. He only cared about... the copper mirror shard.

"Calm down, everyone," the Sect Leader said, laughing. "There is still one more Fellow Daoist who hasn't come yet. Once she arrives, I'll explain everything." The Sect Leader's eyes shone with brilliant light. After dozens of years of preparation, he was now fully confident of being able to stay long term within the necropolis.

"Who else is coming?" Jin Yunshan asked, eyes glittering. Knowing expressions could be seen on the faces of the others. Apparently, everyone had an idea who the Sect Leader was talking about.

Meng Hao's eyes glittered as he looked off into the distance and saw a

white beam of light shooting toward them. It wasn't bright, being composed of a mist. However, that mist soon dissipated, revealing the image of a woman.

She wore a long white robe, and was gracefully beautiful. She looked almost like a female Immortal, except that her eyes seemed filled with mist, making it impossible to see her pupils. It almost was as if her eyes had been intentionally obscured with mist to prevent people from seeing them.

"Greetings, Fellow Daoist Bai." As soon as the crowd caught sight of her, they clasped hands and bowed in greeting. Even Jin Yunshan and Sha Jiudong treated her with the utmost respect.

This woman was none other than one of Planet Vast Expanse's four peak 9-Essences experts, the mysterious woman whom Meng Hao had never laid eyes on before this day. She hadn't participated in the last foray into the necropolis, but here she was today... Bai Wuchen.

Because she was like an Immortal floating in the wind, on Planet Vast Expanse she was called Immortal Bai Wuchen.

As soon as Meng Hao laid eyes on her, she turned to look at him, and their gazes met. Despite feeling as if he were separated from her by some sort of mist, he smiled, although he didn't say anything.

She nodded at him, then looked away.

"Fellow Daoist Bai," said the Sect Leader, "with you joining us on our trip into the necropolis, I'm much more confident in our being able to succeed." He laughed heartily, then looked over the group and began to explain why the preparations had taken so many years, and how he planned to evade the catastrophe that lay in wait in the necropolis.

"Over the years, I analyzed everything that happened within the necropolis, and also studied the ancient records. One thing I can be certain of is that the entire catastrophe doesn't last for very long. Only about ten days.

"What we need to do is figure out how to survive inside of the necropolis

for those ten days.

“After all, once inside of the necropolis, even though it is an illusory world, if you die inside, you will die in reality. Therefore, the key is to be in a state of reality, and yet unreality, in a state of illusion, and yet not illusion.

“In that aspect, Fellow Daoist Bai can help us. If we need even more assistance, I’ve also made other preparations.” No one spoke or asked any questions during his speech.

When he finished, he didn’t wait for anyone to ask any questions. He waved his right hand, causing a turtle shell to appear, about the size of a palm. It glittered with scintillating light, like a precious treasure, and even emanated pulses of pressure. When the Sect Leader took hold of it, it almost looked as if his hand weren’t part of the world any more. His flesh was visible, and yet undetectable via divine sense.

“It took me dozens of years to prepare this particular item,” he said.

Almost as soon as the turtle shell appeared, the expressions of the others flickered.

“That item....”

“Sect Leader, are you sure about this? You can’t treat that thing lightly!”

“This object is the Vast Expanse School’s sect-protecting precious treasure,” the Sect Leader said, his voice a bit hoarse. “Usually, it is used to suppress a certain qi flow, but over the past dozens of years, I used significant amounts of my own heart-blood to suppress the qi flow to the ultimate degree. I can guarantee that for half of a sixty-year-cycle, the sect-protecting precious treasure will not be needed there.

“With this object, and Fellow Daoist Bai’s magical technique, I’m eighty percent certain that we can endure through the catastrophe. Furthermore, as Fellow Daoist Bai reminded me, she has conducted thorough research regarding the necropolis, no less than I have. She happened to find a clue in the ancient records which indicates that there is a region on the third land mass where the destructive effects of the catastrophe are

significantly reduced.

“I also remember seeing some information along those lines. If I remember correctly, there is some power there which resists the world-destructive force. It is in that location that we will use Fellow Daoist Bai’s magical technique, along with the Vast Expanse School’s precious treasure, increasing our chances to well over ninety percent!” As everyone mulled over the Sect Leader’s words, Meng Hao’s eyes flickered with an undetectable gleam.

Next was a bit of discussion about various details. After confirming that things were all in order, and also coming up with a backup plan for how to escape if things went awry, the teleportation portal was activated.

As Meng Hao waited inside the portal, he thought about what the Sect Leader had said. Somehow, he had the feeling that the location the Sect Leader referred to was highly likely to be connected to the copper mirror shard.

As he contemplated the matter, the brilliant light of the spell formation began to rise up. It was at that point that he happened to look over at Jin Yunshan, to find the man was looking back at him.

Jin Yunshan immediately shivered, as an uneasy feeling rose up inside of him. When he thought back to the past conflicts between himself and Meng Hao, and the fact that they were heading back into the necropolis, he gritted his teeth and, before the spell formation could completely activate, began to walk in Meng Hao’s direction.

Everyone looked on in shock, and the Sect Leader and Sha Jiudong felt their hearts beginning to thump. Meng Hao’s eyes flickered coldly.

Suddenly, Jin Yunshan made a grasping motion, causing a bracelet of holding to appear. Face expressionless, he tossed it over to Meng Hao.

Meng Hao grabbed it and looked inside, whereupon a strange expression appeared on his face. The bracelet of holding was packed with spirit stones and medicinal pills, as well as various extraordinary magical items.

Because of everything that had occurred with the Mountain and Sea

Realm, and all the other things he had experienced, his personality had changed significantly. However, there were certain things about him that existed deep in his bones, things that could never be thoroughly wiped away. After looking into the bracelet of holding, his eyes glittered brightly, and he smiled.

Seeing the smile on Meng Hao's face, Jin Yunshan breathed a sigh of relief. He completely ignored the strange looks that had appeared in the eyes of the onlookers because of his paying a protection fee....

He could never forget how, when they had returned from the necropolis last time, Meng Hao had looked at him with disfavor, and then they had exchanged blows. When that happened, he had shouted out about how he had paid compensation already, and the result was a somewhat bashful expression had flickered across Meng Hao's face.

"You can try to hide it," he thought, "but my Flame Eye can see your greedy nature. Hmph! I've already given you a bracelet of holding, so if you look at me the wrong way again, then I'll remind you about that fact to make sure things don't go too far. And if you really get out of hand... well, I've prepared five more bracelets of holding. Don't think I won't be able to handle you this time!" Snorting coldly inside, Jin Yunshan stuck his jaw out, looking as proud and lofty as ever.

Meng Hao cleared his throat, feeling a bit embarrassed by the strange looks being cast in his direction. It had been a long time since people had looked at him that way.

The Sect Leader exchanged an astonished glance with Sha Jiudong, although neither spoke. As for Immortal Bai Wuchen, she had a strange expression on her face as she glanced first at Jin Yunshan and then at Meng Hao.

The other 9-Essences experts refrained from reacting, unsure of what they should even say.

After a long moment passed, the spell formation light shot up into the clouds, and the group vanished. When they reappeared, they were on the very border of the necropolis's outer region.

From a distance, the necropolis looked just like it had last time. There were endless ruins and nine land masses. It was a desolate and ancient place, filled with silence.

The instant Meng Hao appeared, he could sense the coldness in the area, and how the bronze lamp flickered in response. Yet again, he sensed how he could command the ghosts.

“In this place, I am the Emperor.... And I’m here for the copper mirror.” He closed his eyes, and somehow, he could almost hear the countless ghosts in the necropolis crying out in greeting.

Chapter 1469: Conflicts

As soon as the entire group appeared in the necropolis, everyone turned to look at Meng Hao, with the exception of Immortal Bai Wuchen.

The Sect Leader clasped hands and bowed to him.

Meng Hao nodded, his eyes flickering. His purpose in coming to the necropolis this time was clear. He wanted to get to the third land mass and find the copper mirror shard. As for what everyone else did, he didn't really care. In fact, he planned to leave everyone behind as soon as possible.

The ideal outcome would be to handle all matters within one month. That way he wouldn't have to try to weather out the apocalypse with the rest of the group. Suddenly his third eye opened, and he looked out as the ruins around him completely changed.

Without any hesitation, he shot forward. Everyone else began to follow, clearly able to sense the increased coldness in the area. That meant that they were surrounded by countless ghosts, and yet, Meng Hao's own calm demeanor allowed them to remain completely calm.

Immortal Bai Wuchen had a slightly different reaction; a strange gleam appeared in her eyes as she took everything in. In the end, she looked thoughtfully at Meng Hao.

Time passed. Previously, it had taken them two days to get through the perimeter region of the necropolis, but this time, it only took two hours to reach the bridge leading to the first land mass.

Being familiar with the bridge as well, they were able to make it across much more quickly. After only about another two hours, they were on the first land mass.

People were starting to get excited to be on the land mass again. As for Meng Hao, he didn't even stop. He proceeded along quickly, heading toward where the first land mass connected to the second.

The Sect Leader could see how anxious he was, but after a moment of

hesitation, he said, “Fellow Daoist Ninth Paragon, please wait a moment. There’s no hurry to get to the second land mass. Let’s give Fellow Daoist Bai some time on the altar to seek enlightenment. There will be plenty of time afterward.”

Meng Hao frowned, then nodded and changed directions, heading directly toward the center of the land mass. After half a day of speeding along, Bai Wuchen stepped onto the Transcendence Dais. Meng Hao looked off in the direction of the third land mass, the gleam in his eyes growing more intense.

After seven days passed, Immortal Bai Wuchen was still in the midst of seeking enlightenment. That caught Meng Hao’s attention, and yet all he did was glance at her. Eight days passed. On the ninth day, Bai Wuchen trembled, and then slowly rose to her feet, a strange look gleaming in her eyes. She glanced over at Meng Hao briefly before looking away.

By the time Bai Wuchen had finished her enlightenment, even the Sect Leader was starting to get a bit anxious. They traveled on for another half day until they were on the border of the first land mass, where it connected to the second.

In this location, there was no bridge, but instead, a staircase floating in the starry sky.

Beneath the staircase was nothing but a swath of pitch black darkness, from within which echoing roars could be heard.

The Sect Leader looked cautiously at the staircase. “These stairs are even more dangerous than the bridge. We need to–” Even as the words left his mouth, though, Meng Hao opened his third eye.

They had already wasted enough time because of Bai Wuchen, leaving less time for Meng Hao to accomplish his goals, and he had no desire to try to stay in this place to weather the catastrophe. As his third eye opened, he threw his arms up into the air, and then sent divine will out in all directions.

In almost immediate response, countless ghosts on the first land mass let out shocking howls that the living couldn’t detect. They flew up into

the air and then began to rush toward Meng Hao from all directions. Even the ghosts outside of the first land mass joined in.

Soon, the coldness around them intensified, and cracking sounds could be heard as the ground began to ice over. Endless numbers of ghosts began to swirl around Meng Hao, forming a vortex. Everyone was shocked, especially Jin Yunshan, who shivered and pulled out a bracelet of holding.

Immortal Bai Wuchen's eyes flickered with a strange light as she looked over at Meng Hao.

"Follow me, Fellow Daoists!" Meng Hao said, pointing forward. His divine will caused the surrounding ghosts to howl as they surrounded Meng Hao and the others and then shot toward the staircase.

Anyone who could actually see the ghosts would have seen what appeared to be a massive sea, howling and roaring as it carried the group up the stairs. Because of those innumerable ghosts, even the most dangerous entities couldn't even get close. It was a truly domineering way to cross the land mass.

It only took a short period of time to fly all the way up the staircase and then land onto the surface of the second land mass.

As soon as they landed, and before the Sect Leader and the others could even get excited, Meng Hao flew up into the air and looked out at the second land mass with his third eye. Then he began to issue a calling with his divine will.

The bronze lamp inside of him flickered brightly, and within the endless ruins on the second land mass, countless ghosts shivered and began to look up. The sensation of the calling coming from Meng Hao caused them to tremble.

"The Emperor is calling to us...."

"The Emperor summons us...."

"That's the aura of the Emperor...." No one could hear the murmured calls, but rumbling echoed out as the ghosts roared and flew into the air toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao didn't slow down at all. Allowing himself to be swept up by all of the ghosts from the perimeter, the first land mass, and the second land mass, he began to speed away. As he did, his voice echoed out within the ears of the other members of the party.

"Fellow Daoists, I won't be participating in the efforts with the Transcendence Dais. I have a personal matter to attend to on the third land mass. After you're finished with your enlightenment, I can return to escort you there." With that, he began to pick up speed. However, it was in that exact moment that Immortal Bai Wuchen's body flickered, and she suddenly vanished. When she reappeared, she was in front of him, her hand held up, causing a field of mist to spring up, blocking his way.

"Fellow Daoist Ninth Paragon," she asked, "the third land mass is extremely important. No matter what personal matter you have to attend to, it would be best to avoid entering it alone. Why don't you wait for us to finish our enlightenment, and we can all go together?"

Meng Hao stopped in place and looked at her coldly, his brow furrowing. He had never had any dealings with Immortal Bai Wuchen, and had no grudges with her. And yet here she was, suddenly acting hostile.

He then thought back to how Jin Yunshan had taken action against him in the past, and his eyes flickered thoughtfully.

Feeling a bit irritated, he said, "I don't care what sensation or perception you've experienced. Please don't forget what kind of person I am. If you don't provoke me, I won't provoke you. "

Before anyone else could even respond, Jin Yunshan chuckled coldly in his mind. He truly wanted to ask Meng Hao who had provoked whom last time they came back from the necropolis, and if Meng Hao was currently in a bad mood.

From what Jin Yunshan could tell, Immortal Bai Wuchen must have felt the same thing he had felt last time, something like the will of Patriarch Vast Expanse, which made her decide to try to kill Meng Hao.

The Sect Leader frowned, and was just about to offer an explanation. However, Meng Hao was not feeling very tolerant at the moment, and took

a step forward. Immortal Bai Wuchen smiled coldly, performing an incantation gesture with her right hand, causing her cultivation base to erupt into a windstorm that blocked Meng Hao's path.

"Screw off!" growled Meng Hao, flicking his sleeve. The surrounding ghosts emitted piercing howls as they charged forward, blasting at Bai Wuchen like a tempest. Booms rang out, and Bai Wuchen's face went pale. She had no choice but to fall back.

As she did, Meng Hao passed by, and began to speed off into the distance.

"Sect Leader. Fellow Daoists," said Immortal Bai Wuchen. "The third land mass is very important to us being able to endure the catastrophe. Clearly he has his reasons for going there alone. If I don't go to personally investigate, my heart can't rest at ease." Ignoring the rest of the group, she flew in pursuit of Meng Hao.

Her eyes glittered with strange light; as it turned out, Jin Yunshan had guessed wrong. She hadn't blocked Meng Hao's path after sensing the will of Patriarch Vast Expanse. The truth was that her real reason for coming into the necropolis was that she was after a certain object located in the third land mass.

It was something very important to her, and in fact, because of that item, something else in her bag of holding was beginning to emit pulsing fluctuations.

No one knew it, but even if the Sect Leader hadn't asked for her help, she still would have come into the necropolis. Based on information she had gleaned from others regarding the previous trip, the gains made by the group were significantly greater than in previous attempts.

That meant that she had a much greater likelihood of acquiring that item she wanted. That was also why she had encouraged the group to try to weather the apocalypse on the third land mass. It was only after arriving in the necropolis itself that she suddenly got a strange feeling regarding Meng Hao.

She somehow had the sensation that his goal was similar to hers, or

even the same.

Thus, she took action right away, and even began to chase after him. The Sect Leader's eyes glittered, as if he had suddenly realized something. Immortal Bai Wuchen was acting completely differently than her usual cool self. Perhaps it had something to do with the Transcendence Dais, although that didn't seem likely.

After a moment of thought, he flew into the air after her. Next, Jin Yunshan and Sha Jiudong exchanged a glance. They also could sense that something fishy was going on. Instead of worrying about the Transcendence Dais, they flew into the air as well.

As for the other 9-Essences Paragons, including the Second Paragon, they got the feeling that there was something very odd about the third land mass. However, considering that the most powerful peak 9-Essences experts were going there right now, it was likely that they themselves wouldn't be able to benefit from anything there. Almost in unison, they began to head toward the second Transcendence Dais in the middle of the second land mass.

Chapter 1470: Copper Mirror Shard!

Meng Hao sped along over the surface of the second land mass, moving so quickly that any observer would only be able to see a blur that left everything rumbling in its wake.

Only he could see the sea of ghosts that surrounded him, endless numbers of them. They radiated obsession, madness, and at the same time, reverence. He was like a king, leading his armies across the lands.

More and more ghosts flew in to join that army, until both land and sky were completely covered by them. The cold was so intense that everything above and below was freezing over.

It was a majestic sight. He passed through the central part of the second land mass completely unobstructed, heading toward the border, and the third land mass.

His speed increased, and the freezing lands beneath him were like a shadow.

Behind him, Immortal Bai Wuchen was trembling inwardly. Meng Hao was like the blazing sun at noon, and was someone she actually had no desire to provoke. However, it was clear that he was working toward the same goal she was, and therefore, she had no choice but to attempt to stop him. She couldn't permit anyone to interfere with her opportunity to return home.

Her eyes glittered with killing intent as she pushed herself faster and faster. Behind her was the Sect Leader, then Sha Jiudong and Jin Yunshan in his golden robe. The three of them flew single file through the air, muttering to themselves as they gazed at Bai Wuchen and Meng Hao up ahead.

Rumbling sounds filled Heaven and Earth like the crackle of thunder. The ghosts spun around him as he swept over the land, and when he reached the border, he didn't pause for even a moment. Countless piercing howls rose up as he charged out into the void toward the third land mass.

Not too long after Meng Hao and the sea of ghosts passed into the third land mass, Bai Wuchen appeared, gnashing her teeth. She didn't pause either, summoning a mist that turned her blurry as she also flew out toward the third land mass.

She was followed by the Sect Leader and the other two peak 9-Essences paragons. They hesitated for a moment, but then unleashed various divine abilities to follow. By this point, it would be impossible for them not to have come to the conclusion that the goal of both Meng Hao and Bai Wuchen lay in the third land mass.

As for what exactly that goal was, and why it caused the two of them to be so focused, the Sect Leader and the others didn't know. It might be a bit more possible to rationalize Bai Wuchen's actions, but as for Meng Hao, he wasn't even the Ninth Paragon to begin with, and had only been to this place once before. However, in that first time he visited, he had clearly discovered something new.

Time passed. Meng Hao was in the lead, increasing his speed the entire time, surrounded by a sea of ghosts. Soon, he was speeding across the surface of the third land mass itself. He knew Bai Wuchen was behind him, but all he did was snort coldly and completely ignore her as he flew at top speed toward his target destination.

As soon as Meng Hao began speeding in that particular direction, Bai Wuchen's pupils constricted. By now, she was certain that Meng Hao was indeed heading to the exact same position as her target.

"Dammit!" she thought, her eyes flickering with killing intent. Gritting her teeth, she even drew on her longevity for more speed and power. She bit down on her tongue and spit up a mouthful of blood, transforming herself into a mist. That mist rapidly became a blood mist, which shot forward with increased speed, and an intense, murderous aura.

Almost immediately, the distance between her and Meng Hao was narrowed down dramatically. Then, she performed a teleportation, and appeared directly ahead of Meng Hao. There, her eyes turned red as she shoved her hand out toward him.

“Get back!” she said, her voice ice cold. At the same time, she unleashed the power of her cultivation base, causing Heaven-shaking, Earth-shattering power to converge on her palm. The result was that the mist in front of her took the shape of a gigantic hand that crushed toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao’s eyes were glacially cold. By now, he could tell that Bai Wuchen had ascertained his own goal in this place.

“Does that mean that she came to the necropolis with the same objective in mind?” Even as he reached this point in his train of thought, he snorted coldly and led the ghosts in a charge toward the mist hand. They howled, causing everything to shake as they slammed into the hand.

From a distance, it wasn’t possible to see the ghosts, but it was possible to see the hand lurching to a halt, unable to get near Meng Hao. Then, it collapsed, and Immortal Bai Wuchen’s face fell. She quickly retreated, transforming into a mist that vanished from in front of the deadly attack of the sea of ghosts.

Meng Hao turned his head to look at a seemingly empty spot in the air off in the distance, his eyes glittering with killing intent as he said, “Get in my way one more time, and I’ll kill you no matter the price I have to pay.”

With that, he turned and flew away.

It wasn’t that he didn’t want to kill Bai Wuchen. Unfortunately, her techniques were far stranger than the golden-robed Jin Yunshan’s. There was something very dangerous about her, as far as Meng Hao could sense.

Therefore, unless it was absolutely necessary, he didn’t want to force her hand.

After Meng Hao left, the mist reappeared in the spot where he had been looking, quickly transforming into the form of a woman. It was none other than Immortal Bai Wuchen, her face pale, her expression unyielding. Unfortunately, she was running out of options.

She could sense how Meng Hao seemed to be invincibly powerful, and in fact didn’t even need to attack: he could have the ghosts do it for him.

“I’ve spent years in preparation. I’ve waited and waited. My chance is finally here. That second mirror shard belongs to me, and anyone who tries to fight me over it will die!” Eyes gleaming with madness, she began to pant. Then, she turned as the Sect Leader and the others approached.

When she saw them, her eyes glittered, and her lips could be seen moving as she transmitted separate messages to all of them.

“You’re serious?!?”

“What did you just say?!?”

“That thing is real?!?”

The Sect Leader and the others all blurted responses at almost the same time. The first response came from the Sect Leader, who immediately began to breathe deeply, his eyes shining as he stared at Immortal Bai Wuchen.

The second response was from Sha Jiudong. A tremor ran through him, and he almost seemed to change into a different person as he stared at Immortal Bai Wuchen. Although he concealed what he was feeling, his eyes were bloodshot, and he seemed to be profoundly shocked.

The third response naturally came from Jin Yunshan, who began to pant, his expression one of complete disbelief.

“You three will know shortly whether or not I’m telling the truth.” With that, she waved her hand, causing three jade slips to fly out, each one of which contained different sets of information. The Sect Leader and the others all caught them.

As soon as the jade slip landed in the Sect Leader’s hand, he studied it, and then his face darkened. After a moment, he took a deep breath, and something like a struggle could be seen in his eyes. Then the jade slip faded away, and his expression became very grim.

As for Sha Jiudong, when he finished looking at the jade slip, he didn’t say a word. However, his eyes seemed more bloodshot than before, and even radiated a rapturous glow.

Then there was Jin Yunshan, who gripped the jade slip so hard that veins popped out on his hand.

“Fellow Daoists,” Bai Wuchen said, “would the three of you please assist me? As for all those ghosts he’s called, I have a way to neutralize them for two hours.” Bai Wuchen looked expectantly at the three other Paragons, certain that they would be moved by her offer. She had planned long and hard to get the mirror shard, and had spared no cost in her efforts. Originally, she had prepared those jade slips to prevent them from fighting with her over the mirror shard.

But Meng Hao had changed everything, and she was now forced to do things a bit ahead of schedule.

After finishing speaking, she clasped hands and bowed. Without waiting for a response from the other three, she turned to leave. In her heart, she was completely and utterly convinced that they would agree to help her deal with Meng Hao.

After she left, Sha Jiudong was the first to take to flight, his eyes bloodshot, his killing intent rising rapidly.

The next was Jin Yunshan, veins still pulsing on his hand, but face expressionless.

Finally was the Sect Leader. He took a deep breath, and the brightness in his eyes faded a bit. His expression turned cold, and he murmured, “Please forgive me, Fellow Daoist Meng...”

With that, his energy began to rise, and he flew in pursuit of the others.

The group of three went with Bai Wuchen in pursuit of Meng Hao, who had already caught sight of the location which was his destination, not too far off in the distance.

It was a desert, the sands of which were being whipped into a frenzy by a gusting wind. As he neared, Meng Hao took a deep breath, then waved both of his hands out in front of him, simultaneously unleashing divine will.

As the countless ghosts began to spread out to lock the area down, the

excitement and anticipation in Meng Hao's face grew.

He waved his hand toward the desert, and a boom echoed out. As everything shook, the sand began to churn, slowly gathering together to form a mountain.

As the mountain took shape, the desert itself shrank. The sand mountain reached higher and higher into the sky, touching clouds. Soon, the desert was no more.

Revealed in front of Meng Hao was a stretch of ruins which had been buried underneath the desert. And in the middle of those ruins was a lake!

A closer inspection revealed that it was actually not a lake, but rather... a jagged shard of a mirror. However, it was so huge that at first glance it actually looked like a lake.

Meng Hao's heart began to pound at the sight of the mirror shard. He thought of the parrot, of the copper mirror, and of many other things. Taking a deep breath, he reached out and made a grasping motion.

Chapter 1471: Righteous Jin Yunshan!

In almost the exact same instant that Meng Hao was reaching out to grab the mirror shard, rumbling sounds could be heard outside of the desert as Bai Wuchen, Sha Jiudong, the Sect Leader, and Jin Yunshan, four Potentates of Planet Vast Expanse, all attacked together!

Their combined attack caused intense, rumbling pressure. This was not the power of one attack, but numerous attacks combined. A mad tempest sprang up that, although it couldn't be said to be Transcendent, it was very close!

A slashing force like that wasn't capable of shaking the entire sea of ghosts, but it was so sharp that it could slice right through it.

The combined attack of the four powerful experts was like a blade slicing through bamboo, pushing ever closer toward the desert area.

Meng Hao ignored the rumbling sounds, and slowly closed his hand. The mirror shard flew toward him, shrinking down at the same time, until it was the size of a finger.

It looked ordinary, like nothing special at all. However, it was possible to detect that this object far exceeded even the most precious of treasures: it held faint traces of the aura of Transcendence.

As soon as Meng Hao touched it, he could sense what were apparently faint pulses of sealing power on the mirror shard, causing him to smile thoughtfully.

This mirror shard had numerous uses, and whoever acquired it would have to research it deeply to ascertain them. Except for Meng Hao. To him, uses which could be determined by means of research were all incorrect as far as he was concerned!

Only Meng Hao could use the mirror shard for its intended purpose. After all, the shard had once been part of the copper mirror, and that copper mirror... recognized Meng Hao as its owner!

Even though he had lost the mirror, and the parrot had erased its mind,

that couldn't change one important fact.... Meng Hao was the master of the copper mirror during this era!

Neither Heaven nor Earth could change that.

Meng Hao looked at the mirror shard, gathered his divine sense, and then performed an incantation gesture with his left hand, pushing down onto the shard.

As he did, he forced a drop of blood out of the tip of his finger. When it merged into the mirror shard, his mind trembled, and he felt as if his consciousness were inside of the shard itself. Everything around him was rumbling. However, it was in this moment that he suddenly realized that there were certain fluctuations which he could sense, somewhere outside of the necropolis.

They were very faint, but they were there. Meng Hao instantly recognized that they were... the fluctuations of the copper mirror, and the aura of the parrot!

He shivered, and began to breathe deeply. He tried to issue a calling, but the mirror shard wasn't powerful enough. A few tests all failed.

"Only one shard isn't enough. If I can collect all the shards, though, I will definitely be able to summon the mirror!" His eyes shone with a bright light. Taking a deep breath, he ceased his attempts to call out to the copper mirror, and instead looked around quietly.

Gradually, his eyes began to shine brightly as he realized that within the starry sky of the Vast Expanse, there were eight locations which all had auras that tugged at him!

One of them was the copper mirror itself, which was the furthest away from him. It was so far that its specific location was difficult to determine. As for the other seven locations, he could sense exactly where they were, even the ones which were far away.

"I found one of the mirror shards in the Mountain and Sea Realm," he murmured. "At that time, my cultivation base wasn't strong enough to detect the location of the other shards." Using his divine sense, he was

able to stare directly at... the closest of the mirror shards. 1

It was so close, he was almost right on top of it.

“No wonder she knew about the mirror shard,” he thought. “So that’s how it is. She actually has one of the other shards!” His eyes glittered brightly as he realized that the nearest of the other seven mirror shards was right here on the third land mass, within the sea of ghosts, in the hands of... Bai Wuchen!

Almost in the same moment that he sent his divine sense into the mirror shard, rumbling sounds filled the air as four people appeared, shooting toward him like lightning.

They attacked with full power, blasting through the sea of ghosts and appearing near the desert and Meng Hao. As Meng Hao turned around to face them, they saw the mirror shard in his hand.

In the moment that Bai Wuchen realized what had occurred, her pupils constricted, and she shot toward him, energy surging.

“Please don’t take offense, Ninth paragon....” the Sect Leader said with a sigh. Clapping hands, he began to stride forward.

Sha Jiudong didn’t say anything, and as for Jin Yunshan, those veins were still bulging out, and his face was expressionless.

The Sect Leader was behind Bai Wuchen. Next to him was Sha Jiudong, and furthest in the back was Jin Yunshan. They were like four powerful arrows shooting toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao wasn’t too surprised to see all of them attacking. If he were Bai Wuchen, and was able to sense the mirror shard in the necropolis, then he would have made plenty of preparations, including a way to force the other peak 9-Essences Paragons to help.

“I’m not sure what you want these mirror shards for,” he said coolly, “but I have to thank you for saving me the trouble of finding yours.” His expression was the same as ever as he faced the four incoming Paragons. He waved his hand, causing the sea of ghosts to scream as they merged into a tempest that spread out to meet his four attackers.

Earlier, the group of four had attacked and dispersed only one part of the sea of ghosts which had been blockading the area. Now they were facing an attack from the combined power of all the ghosts, which was a force that was completely different than before.

As the sea of ghosts surged toward them, icy coldness froze up everything in the area. But then, a bright glimmer appeared in Bai Wuchen's eyes. She grabbed out into the air and, all of a sudden, her own mirror shard appeared in her hand!

It was a bit bigger than the shard Meng Hao had acquired. As soon as it appeared, Bai Wuchen spit out some life force Essence aura onto it, then raised it above her head.

The mirror shard flickered brightly, shining with light that could shake Heaven and Earth. Everywhere it passed, the ghosts shivered, then suddenly stopped in place, blank expressions on their faces.

In the blink of an eye, the light had swept about in all directions, causing all of the ghosts to stop moving.

Blood sprayed out of Bai Wuchen's mouth. Obviously, using the mirror shard in that way came at a heavy price. However, a moment later, she was charging toward Meng Hao again.

The Sect Leader began to stride forward silently, as did Sha Jiudong and Jin Yunshan. The entire group of four passed the motionless ghosts to head directly toward Meng Hao.

It almost looked like a scene in which Meng Hao was the guardian of the third land mass, and these four were invaders who had entered the place after untold hardship, and were now attempting to kill Meng Hao to win their prize.

"That's not how to use the copper mirror shard," Meng Hao said, his expression the same as ever. He looked up, clenching his right hand into a fist which he then punched out at Immortal Bai Wuchen.

He immediately resorted to the Devil-Butchering Fist, which contained the embodiment of the God-Slaying, Self-Immolation, and Life-

Extermination fists within it. One massive fist strike shook Heaven and Earth, leaving everything trembling.

A huge boom rang out, and Immortal Bai Wuchen trembled. Blood oozed out of the corners of her mouth as she was shoved backward. However, Meng Hao was also forced back, his face flushed. As for Sha Jiudong, he transformed into a windstorm which then hurtled violently toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao snorted coldly, raising both hands up into the air. At the same time, he transformed into an azure roc which shot forward to meet Sha Jiudong. Massive booms echoed out as Sha Jiudong emerged from the sand, staggering backward several paces. Meng Hao also fell back, blood oozing out of his mouth. Then he looked up at the Sect Leader, who had mixed emotions on his face as he stabbed his finger toward Meng Hao's forehead.

That finger attack was like the might of Heaven, causing incredible pressure to weigh down. However, in that same moment, Meng Hao performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, unleashing the Essence of the Eight Hex, space. Instantly, it was as if a separate world had been erected.

The Sect Leader's finger clearly landed onto Meng Hao, and yet Meng Hao didn't move a muscle. In contrast, the Sect Leader flew backward, face flickering as he waved his sleeve. As he dodged the Essence of space, he prepared to make another attack, when all of a sudden Jin Yunshan let out a piercing cry and shot violently toward Meng Hao.

Everyone assumed that he was just about to attack Meng Hao. But then, he suddenly spun in place. As he neared Meng Hao, he reached out toward the Sect Leader and then jerked his hands apart.

It was none other than his Heaven Ripping magic!

A boom rang out, and the Sect Leader frowned. His hands flashed in a double-handed incantation gesture, causing powerful ripples to spread out in defense. The sudden change in the tide of battle was so startling that the Sect Leader had no choice but to suddenly back up. Sha Jiudong was

also prevented from attacking, and Immortal Bai Wuchen was taken completely off guard.

“Jin Yunshan, are you crazy!?!?” she roared in rage. What she had offered Jin Yunshan earlier was so incredible that she had been certain he would be incapable of resisting.

“Nine Essences Redistillation Fruits might be rare in the Vast Expanse,” Jiu Yunhan said, “and if you had actually pulled one out and handed it over, I might have been impressed. But you only offered a lead on how to get one. Your information might be completely accurate, and maybe I really could find that Nine Essences Redistillation Fruit eventually, but... I’m not that kind of person! I’ve always been righteous, and I already made an agreement with Fellow Daoist Meng to cease hostilities. I take my promises seriously, so how could I possibly go back on my word!?” Jin Yunshan stuck his chin out, looking incredibly proud.

The truth was, he was cursing inside.

“You fool, Bai Wuchen,” he thought as he stood there next to Meng Hao. “Unless you’re absolutely certain of being able to kill Meng Hao, then, well fudge, considering his crazy personality, do you think he would ever let me get that Nine Essences Redistillation Fruit? In the cultivation world, promises are the least trustworthy of all things. I don’t know why the other two agreed with you. The Sect Leader has the Vast Expanse School, and Sha Jiudong is stubborn. But I, Jin Yunshan, am not easily fooled!”

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1. Meng Hao collected the other mirror shard in chapter 619.

Chapter 1472: That's Not How To Use That Mirror Shard!

Immortal Bai Wuchen's countless machinations hadn't taken into consideration the indescribable level of fear Jin Yunshan felt because of Meng Hao.

Deep within his heart, he didn't possess even the shred of a desire to provoke Meng Hao the lunatic.

It was as he had just said. If Bai Wuchen had actually offered him a Nine Essences Redistillation Fruit, he would have helped her immediately. However, a mere piece of information, no matter how certain it was, could not make him do anything to offend Meng Hao.

He had hesitated for a moment, a bit earlier. However, Meng Hao's complete and utter calm despite the sea of ghosts being taken out of action left Jin Yunshan in a dilemma. Gritting his teeth, he had trusted his intuition regarding Meng Hao, and switched sides.

Nobody, not even Immortal Bai Wuchen, would have been able to guess that Meng Hao had frightened Jin Yunshan so deeply that he would do something like this. Meng Hao couldn't help but look over at him in surprise.

Jin Yunshan looked askance at Meng Hao and said, "What are you looking at? Fellow Daoist Meng, don't tell me you think I'm the backstabbing type? We had our agreement to cease hostilities, and my word is my bond. Nor will I flip out and lose my temper. When I say I'll do something, then I'll do it."

He seemed quite proud, and he couldn't conceal the bit of derision that had seeped into his tone.

Immortal Bai Wuchen's face darkened, and Sha Jiudong sighed. The Sect Leader smiled wryly as he looked at Jin Yunshan.

Jin Yunshan cleared his throat as he continued to look over at Meng Hao.

“Fellow Daoist Meng, if you need direct assistance from me, we can discuss the matter. For the time being, I won’t get in the way of the other Fellow Daoists.” Jin Yunshan laughed heartily, then flew off to the side, acting as though he wouldn’t get involved no matter what happened.

He had chosen to switch sides, but there were different ways to switch sides. As long as he didn’t help Meng Hao fight, then Bai Wuchen and the Sect Leader, and even Sha Jiudong, wouldn’t be able to say anything.

Because of the current situation, he was now vastly more important to Meng Hao than before, and might even be able to determine whether Meng Hao survived the catastrophe which had struck him. Of course, Meng Hao would have to pay a price for that. On the other hand, if Bai Wuchen wanted to avoid a complete failure in her plan, she would also need to pay a price.

According to Jin Yunshan’s calculations, things might even develop in such a way that he wouldn’t help either side at all, but would still end up profiting from both sides. The best part of it all was that he would avoid doing anything whatsoever that Meng Hao might be offended by.

Having reached these conclusions, Jin Yunshan smiled proudly.

Immortal Bai Wuchen snorted coldly, ignoring Jin Yunshan and turning to the Sect Leader and Sha Jiudong.

“Fellow Daoists, as for the promises I made, I can swear a Dao oath that they are true!” As soon as the words left her mouth, the Sect Leader nodded, and Sha Jiudong’s eyes glittered with red light.

The three of them then once again went on the offensive. They shot toward Meng Hao, Bai Wuchen in the lead, with the other two coming from the opposite sides, completely locking him down.

Meng Hao’s expression was calm as he looked at his three attackers. Even as they bore down on him, he pushed his hand out, and numerous mountains began to descend. Even as the mountains blocked his three opponents, Meng Hao’s hands flashed in a double-handed incantation gesture. The Eighth Hex appeared. Then the Seventh, and the Sixth. They flew out in rapid succession. As Bai Wuchen and the other two dealt with

the mountains, Meng Hao unleashed all of the Hexes down to the First.

“Eight Hexes, combine!” he said, eyes flashing. He performed an incantation gesture, and then waved both hands out in front of him. Instantly, the eight Hexing magics combined, transforming into numerous threads which became a huge net. That net then shot toward the group of three.

The Sect Leader frowned, performing a double-handed incantation gesture that caused the sky to grow dark. At the same time, a shocking mountain peak appeared, descending from the Heavens to hover above the Sect Leader’s head.

“Cauldron Mountain Conjury!” he said in his ancient voice. Waving his hands, he caused the mountain to begin to grow rapidly, until it seemed to supercede Heaven and Earth. At the same time, it shot directly toward Meng Hao.

Meanwhile, Sha Jiudong began to spin in place, transforming into a raging sandstorm, inside of which could be seen a two-horned head. The head’s eyes were crimson, and it let out a piercing shriek as it shot toward Meng Hao.

Immortal Bai Wuchen’s eyes flickered. Hands flashing with an incantation gesture, her Essence power erupted out, causing all color in the world to be masked as fog billowed out.

Boundless, endless fog turned the entire world into a place of fog that sought to bore into every pore in Meng Hao’s body.

Three peak 9-Essences cultivators were all attacking simultaneously, a majestic sight that caused Heaven and Earth to shake violently. Meng Hao was powerful, but not even he was a match for three peak 9-Essences experts. Blood oozed out of the corners of his mouth as he staggered backward. Killing intent gleamed in Immortal Bai Wuchen’s eyes as she suddenly reached out and performed an incantation gesture, causing a mirror shard to appear.

The shard flickered dazzlingly, and a piercing beam of light suddenly shot out from it, stabbing through anything and everything as it headed

toward Meng Hao.

Rumbling echoed out, and simultaneously, Meng Hao teleported, retreating a significant distance, where he stared at them coldly. At the same time, Jin Yunshan powered up his cultivation base, as if to remind Meng Hao of his presence. As long as both sides were relatively evenly matched, it was to his advantage to remain just as he was.

Meng Hao looked at him with an enigmatic smile, then turned away. From the beginning of the fight down to this moment, he hadn't shown the slightest sign of being ruffled, as if the battle was something he didn't even care about.

"I have to say that this is Meng Hao's first time fighting three peak 9-Essences cultivators at one time," he said coolly, referring to himself by name for the first time. "What a precious opportunity." He shook his head. "But now, it's time to end this farce."

He looked over at the Sect Leader, no killing intent in his gaze whatsoever; he could tell that the man was holding back. As for Sha Jiudong, however, he seemed to be attacking with as much madness at Immortal Bai Wuchen, and yet there were clues within his magical techniques regarding his true attitude.

Not even he wanted to push things to the extreme in this situation.

Immortal Bai Wuchen laughed coldly. "How arrogant! Let me tell you, if you don't hand over that mirror shard, you will die beyond the shadow of a doubt!"

Her right hand flashed with an incantation gesture, and the mirror shard glittered again.

"That's not how to use that mirror shard," Meng Hao said coolly. It was his second time saying such a thing. The first time, Immortal Bai Wuchen hadn't paid attention, but to hear him say it a second time left her heart pounding.

She wasn't the only one. Both the Sect Leader and Sha Jiudong were starting to wonder why Meng Hao was so calm when facing all three of

them in battle.

Even Jin Yunshan's heart was starting to pound.

He waved his sleeve, and his own mirror shard appeared there in his hand. It floated up, radiating scintillating light, as if it were the most precious treasure in the entire world. "Let me show you the correct way to use a shard from the copper mirror."

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Note from Deathblade: This chapter was a bit shorter than usual, coming in at around 1,400 words instead of the usual 2,000 or so.

Chapter 1473: Because It's Mine!

Meng Hao looked at his own mirror shard, his gaze somewhat tender as he recalled the copper mirror itself. He sent some divine will into the shard, and then, utilizing the same method he had used to control the copper mirror, caused a bright light to shine out of it that vastly exceeded the light from before.

It was like a tiny sun there in his hand, and it completely eclipsed the light from the mirror shard held by Immortal Bai Wuchen, becoming the most radiant thing in the entire world.

All other light became darkness in comparison, colorless and black. Everyone who could see the mirror shard was completely shocked by what was happening.

Bai Wuchen's eyes widened. After working with her mirror shard for so many years, she had come to understand some of its properties, and was profoundly aware that the brighter it shone, the more power and pressure it would unleash.

Her heart began to pound, although on the outside, she attempted to maintain a calm front. However, before she could do so for very long, she saw that, unexpectedly, the mirror shard that Meng Hao held in his hand... was beginning to melt!

"What...?" Immortal Bai Wuchen's mind began to spin. What was happening exceeded even her powers of imagination. She could never have guessed that the mirror shard would actually melt. She continued to watch in amazement as the melted mirror shard fused into Meng Hao's right hand, spreading out to cover it, forming... a gauntlet!

It was pitch black, and appeared to part of a set of armor. There was something threatening about it, and it virtually burst with an aura of manic violence.

It was an aura that could shake Heaven and Earth, and at the same time, it seemed elated, as if it had been suppressed for countless years. Now that it could be out in the open, it was like a buried treasure which had finally

been revealed to the light of day, to shine in all its glory.

Bai Wuchen stared in shock, as Meng Hao's previous words continued to echo in her mind.

"Have I been using it wrong?" she thought, her mind reeling. There was no time for her to contemplate how to react. Even as she prepared to steel herself and take action, her own mirror shard suddenly began to tremble, almost as if it were about to slip out of her control.

"This... this is impossible...." she said, her face ashen. She had studied the mirror shard for countless years to figure out how to use it in the way she did, and had always assumed she was using it correctly. But now, after seeing Meng Hao turn his mirror shard into a gauntlet, her mind was in chaos. "How... how did you...?"

Before she could finish speaking, Meng Hao calmly waved his hand. Rumbling sounds echoed out as the mirror shard hovering around Immortal Bai Wuchen, the mirror shard which she had possessed for countless years, suddenly began to shake. Then, it transformed into a beam of light as it severed its own connection to her and shot over to Meng Hao's side.

"NO!" she screamed. It was like an invisible fist slamming into her. Her face went pale white, and she coughed up a mouthful of blood. She simply couldn't accept what was happening. This was her precious treasure, her chance to return home, the object of all her hopes, something she had studied for years and years. In fact, in the past she had even been able to use the mirror shard to detect the presence of other mirror shards that were close by. But now... she found that everything she had come to understand about the shard had been mistaken.

The feeling she was experiencing was like that of raising a child to adulthood, only to find out later that the child was not even related by blood. Then that child ran off with its true family....

Bai Wuchen had even been able to sense the joy within the mirror shard, as if it were reuniting with a relative after years of wandering alone.

"Why is this happening?!?!" Bai Wuchen asked, glaring at Meng Hao

with bloodshot eyes. Her hair was disheveled and she seemed to be slipping into a state of madness. Then she could only watch as her own mirror shard melted, merged into Meng Hao's arm, and became a vambrace that covered his entire arm!

It was pitch black and radiated mysterious light, along with a shocking aura. Upon seeing the armor for the first time, Bai Wuchen, along with everyone else, was completely shaken.

The vambrace was covered with complicated, abstruse designs and cloud-like patterns. Based on the shocking aura of the armor, it almost seemed as if Meng Hao's arm had somehow become connected to the world in some mysterious way.

As all of this happened, the ghosts which had been immobilized began to awaken. As they lifted their heads and looked at Meng Hao, they saw the armor he was wearing, and began to drop to their knees to kowtow.

The world went silent. All eyes were fixed on Meng Hao, or more accurately, on the armor which covered his arm and hand.

The Sect Leader took in a deep breath as he sensed the danger they were now in. Sha Jiudong's pupils constricted, and the madness in his eyes was fading into a bright glow.

Only Immortal Bai Wuchen seemed incapable of accepting the sudden turn of events. Moments ago, she had held the upper hand in the battle, and had her mirror shard to rely on. But then, everything changed.

It was at this point that Meng Hao answered Bai Wuchen's question.

"Because it's mine," he murmured. He looked down at the armor, and his gaze softened. The flicker of reminiscence could be seen in his eyes. When his words echoed out, Bai Wuchen heard them, and a tremor ran through her.

"That's impossible!!" she shrieked, breaking the calm silence that had filled the area. She couldn't accept what was happening, and as such, she lurched into motion, unleashing her cultivation base. The power of nine Essences exploded out, creating a mist that spread out to cover the entire

world, then rumbled down toward Meng Hao.

She refused to yield, not even at this point, not even when her mirror shard had been taken by Meng Hao. She would still risk everything!

“Sect Leader. Fellow Daoist Sha. Please help me one last time!” Her tone was shrill, even pleading. The Sect Leader sighed, then stepped forward, transforming into a beam of light that shot through the Essence mist created by Bai Wuchen.

Then there was Sha Jiudong. He gritted his teeth, then began to spin in place, becoming a tempest that also merged into the mist. The shocking combination of all three of these powerful experts became a destructive attack that bore down on Meng Hao, causing everything in the area to quake violently.

Meng Hao looked up, eyes flickering. His desire to fight suddenly skyrocketed, and he blurred into motion, appearing directly in front of the group of three.

Then, he clenched his hand into a fist, whereupon cloud-like ripples began to spread out. The fist seemed slow, but apparently, Bai Wuchen and the others simply couldn't dodge it. It was as if... the instant he punched out, the blow had already landed onto the Essence mist!

The mist rumbled as though a stormwind had blasted through it. It began to seethe, and booms could be heard. The mist was swept away, evaporated, revealing Bai Wuchen, who coughed up a mouthful of blood. At the same time, Meng Hao took another step forward, unleashing another fist strike at the Sect Leader.

He didn't actually strike the Sect Leader himself, but unleashed the power of the fist right in front of him. A boom could be heard, and a massive blast of wind surged out, causing the Sect Leader's face to flicker. At first he thought he might be able to use some divine abilities to fight back, but then he simply sighed with the realization that there was little to be done now. Instead, he took advantage of the force of the blow to fly backward, leaving the way open for Meng Hao.

Meng Hao strode forward again, turning to look at Sha Jiudong in the

sandstorm. Sha Jiudong chose to do the same as the Sect Leader, and quietly backed up, sighing with the realization that he simply couldn't fight back.

After the Sect Leader and Sha Jiudong retreated, Meng Hao appeared in front of Immortal Bai Wuchen herself, and once again threw out a punch.

Massive rumbling filled the air as the blow slammed into her torso. Cloud-like fluctuations emanated off of the armor, and Bai Wuchen coughed up a mouthful of blood, then tumbled backward like a kite with its string cut, cracking sounds filling the air the entire time. She was unable to stop at first, and coughed up more blood as she continued to fall back. Then, she finally came to a stop 3,000 meters away, where she looked up, face pale. Finally, she coughed up a third mouthful of blood.

Her aura was in chaos, as though something inside of her was reversing her flow of qi and blood. She held nothing back in an attempt to control the force, but that only resulted in more blood oozing out of the corners of her mouth.

The Sect Leader's eyes went wide, but he said nothing. Sha Jiudong subconsciously edged backward a bit, his eyes filled with shock.

As for Jin Yunshan, he sucked in a deep breath, and couldn't help but think to himself that he really had made the right decision earlier.

"Like I said earlier, this farce is over," Meng Hao said coolly. He waved his sleeve, and the howling ghosts in the area began to swirl around him. They transformed into an invisible vortex which spread out in all directions. 50 kilometers. 500 kilometers. 5,000 kilometers. 50,000 kilometers. 500,000 kilometers.... It eventually stretched out so far in every direction that it seemed endless.

Meng Hao was in the very center, like a divine being within the world.

The pressure radiating off of him exploded out, supplanting the pressure of Heaven, covering the entire world. The sea of ghosts also emitted pressure, which combined with Meng Hao's, causing the ground to quake, as though the entire world, as if all Heaven and Earth, were prostrating in worship to Meng Hao.

Jin Yunshan's face fell, and he backed up, rotating his cultivation base. The Sect Leader sighed, clasped hands, and bowed to Meng Hao. Then he made a grasping motion, causing a bag of holding to appear, which he placed down onto the ground and then backed up. After retreating a certain distance, he rotated his cultivation base to protect himself from the intense pressure.

Sha Jiudong also sighed, then produced a bag of holding, placed it onto the ground, and backed up.

Their stance in the matter was clear. Not only had they held back earlier during the fight, they now also offered compensation. In their estimation, Meng Hao would not push the matter to the bitter end.

Chapter 1474: A Long, Long Path....

They were correct. Meng Hao had his way of doing things, and after glancing at the Sect Leader and Sha Jiudong, he nodded slightly, waved his sleeve, and collected the two bags of holding. Then he looked over at Bai Wuchen.

Her lips were still smeared with blood, and her face was ashen. She stood there trembling, a bitter expression on her face as she looked, not at Meng Hao, but off into the distance. Her mood couldn't be lower.

She had been completely and utterly defeated. All of her plans, all of her preparations, were like nothing when it came to Meng Hao's spectacular power.

Although she didn't want to admit it, she knew deep in her heart that what Meng Hao had said was no lie. The mirror shard really did belong to him. If it didn't, then the shard, which she had studied so deeply for so many years, would never have undergone the fantastic transformations it just had.

She also understood even more deeply that her defeat had resulted in her losing not only the mirror shard, but her path home.

"I can't go back now..." she murmured bitterly. "Not unless I Transcend.... But Transcendence is so difficult. I won't even be able to succeed with all nine of the altars here in the necropolis. Even using Patriarch Vast Expanse's Dao altar might not work." The entire reason she had been able to coerce the Sect Leader into helping her was by offering him a clue about Patriarch Vast Expanse's Dao altar.

She knew that because of the techniques she cultivated, Transcendence would be especially difficult for her, far more difficult than it was for the average person. Most importantly, she had been waiting far longer than anyone else. She was one of the first people to descend to Planet Vast Expanse from the Vast Expanse Society.

She had been inside the starry sky of the Vast Expanse for far too long. She wanted to go back, to return home, to leave this place. The power of

the mirror shard, and the Transcendent will it contained, led her to the conclusion that it could cut open the Vast Expanse. Furthermore, the more mirror shards she could collect, the more likely it was that, even without a Transcendent cultivation base, she could still leave the starry sky of the Vast Expanse.

“I just want to go home....” she murmured bitterly. “I just want to leave here, to go back to my home outside the Vast Expanse....” The Sect Leader stood there quietly, and Sha Jiudong sighed inwardly. Mixed emotions could be seen on Jin Yunshan’s face.

“Outside the Vast Expanse?” Meng Hao asked suddenly, looking over at her.

“What is outside of the Vast Expanse? A world like the starry sky inside?” It was a question Meng Hao had pondered ever since his experience under the surface of the first land mass of the necropolis. In the visions he had experienced, he had gone outside of the Vast Expanse, and had seen nothing but desolate emptiness. It was empty, devoid of life. There was nothing there except the five enormous pillars. 1

There definitely hadn’t been any Vast Expanse Society!

Back then, Meng Hao had begun to wonder if the supposed origin of the Vast Expanse School, the so-called Vast Expanse Society, might be... nothing more than a sham. In that case, perhaps the world outside of the Vast Expanse, the place where Transcendent cultivators could go to... was also a sham.

“Outside the Vast Expanse is my home,” Bai Wuchen said quietly. “It’s a flourishing place that the Vast Expanse can’t even compare to. Outside, there is no mist, only a dazzling starry sky, and one planet after another after another, filled with life.

“Immortal spirit aura is thick and abundant there. What we have here can’t even compare. Here, we are like poor beggars!” Although her words were simple, as she spoke, her eyes shone brightly. In Meng Hao’s mind, he could almost imagine the celestial utopia she described, and although it was completely different from what he had seen outside the Vast Expanse,

his eyes glittered nonetheless. As he looked around, he realized that the Sect Leader, Sha Jiudong, and even Jin Yunshan all seemed to be lost in their memories, just like Bai Wuchen was.

Meng Hao's scalp began to tingle. Inside of him was the remnant of the true Ninth Paragon's soul, which he had long since Soulsearched. At that time, he hadn't found any memories regarding what was outside the Vast Expanse. It was as if those memories were sealed, and could not be accessed.

"What exactly is outside the Vast Expanse?" he thought. "Is it like Bai Wuchen described, or is it like what I saw?" His eyes flickered as he once again looked over at Immortal Bai Wuchen. Despite the fact that she had tried to kill him, she still cut a very lamentable figure.

She wanted to return to her home, just like Meng Hao wanted to return to his....

He sighed and looked away, transforming into a beam of light that shot off into the distance, accompanied by the ghosts.

Meng Hao had accomplished his goal in coming to the necropolis; he had acquired the copper mirror shard. In fact, he had actually acquired two of them. There was now no reason for him to stay behind. He would leave the necropolis and return to Planet Vast Expanse. Then he would follow the tug of the mirror shards he possessed to find the other six!

"Once I find them, I can call out to the copper mirror, and summon it back from wherever it is!" The glow in his eyes shone brighter and brighter as he passed from the third land mass into the second, and then finally reached the first. He crossed the bridge of flesh and blood, went through the perimeter region, and finally, stepped into the teleportation portal that was the exit. There, he stopped and looked back.

As he gazed out at the distant ninth land mass, he could just barely make out that enormous throne, and the blurry figure sitting upon it, who seemed to be looking at him.

With that, he turned and stepped into the teleportation portal.

After Meng Hao left, the Sect Leader and the others stood there silently for a moment, completely shaken. Having been defeated, Bai Wuchen's only hope of returning to her home now rested with Transcendence. After revealing the information she had promised to the Sect Leader and Sha Jiudong, they proceeded to seek enlightenment on the Transcendence Daises of the second and third land masses. When the time came, they would seek to survive the apocalypse on the third land mass using the turtle shell.

The paths being tread were different, and thus the choices were also different. To Meng Hao, the Transcendence Daises in the necropolis were useless at the moment. Only after he successfully formed the Ninth Hex could he return, then try to make it to the ninth altar. Then, he could dispel the mists, and use the power of the altar to combine the nine Hexes.

As for the Sect Leader and the others, their cultivation bases were already at the pinnacle, which left them with only a single direction to follow: Transcendence. It might be difficult, but as long as the slightest possibility of success remained, they would not give up.

Back on the half-planet, Meng Hao stepped out of the teleportation portal, his hair floating around him. A thoughtful expression could be seen on his face as his third eye closed, reverting into nothing more than a violet mark on his forehead.

Then, he flickered into motion, returning to his secluded meditation facilities in Ninth Paragon City. There, he extended his right hand, causing the two mirror shards to float up in front of him.

Next, he sent some divine sense into the shards, and was immediately able to sense seven different locations in the starry sky of the Vast Expanse. One of them was the copper mirror, the position of which he couldn't lock down definitively. However, the other six locations were quite the opposite; he could determine exactly where they were.

He tried summoning the copper mirror. While it was true that two mirror shards were more powerful than one, they still weren't powerful enough to succeed in that. He would definitely need more shards.

“My clone is already on the right track,” he thought. “The moment he enters the Dao Realm, he’ll be able to fully form the first of the nine sealing marks.” His clone’s experience in the Vast Expanse Shrine had actually changed Meng Hao’s plans. However, he still wasn’t completely certain about the matter, and needed to wait until the first sealing mark was complete before making a final decision.

“Since that’s the case, there’s no reason for me to stay here in the Vast Expanse School.” Eyes flickering with bright light, he decided to leave. He would journey into the starry sky and follow the pull of the copper mirror shards, to collect the remaining six.

“A long, long path....” he thought. He could sense that the six mirror shards were scattered in a variety of locations throughout the starry sky of the Vast Expanse, and that it wouldn’t be easy to gather them together. It wasn’t something that could be accomplished in a short amount of time either.

After a moment of thought, a profound look could be seen in his eyes. He sent out some divine will, which was immediately detected by his subordinates, the 7-Essences and 8-Essences Paragons.

Meng Hao wasn’t sure how long he would be gone, and there were many responsibilities to be handled while he was gone, including matters regarding the expansion of the Ninth Sect, as well as things pertaining to his clone. After making the relevant explanations and arrangements, he left.

A beam of light shot up, leaving the lands below, leaving Planet Vast Expanse, and entering the starry sky. There, he looked out at the Vast Expanse, his eyes flickering. Based on the tug he felt, he headed in the direction of the nearest mirror shard.

Before, it would have been very, very difficult for Meng Hao to attempt to track down all of the mirror shards. However, his cultivation base was now strong enough to fight with the peak of 9-Essences, and he also had two mirror shards that could transform into armor. With all that, he was confident that... other than a Transcendent cultivator, it would be easier to

find a phoenix feather or a qilin horn than to find someone who could cause problems for him in a fight.

As his true self was leaving, his clone was sitting cross-legged in the Ninth Sect. After taking 1st place in the Vast Expanse Shrine, he had been named the Legacy disciple of the Ninth Sect, and was given a mountain peak which was superior in all terms, including the view and the amount of spiritual energy.

The entire mountain belonged to Meng Hao, and was protected by numerous restrictive spell formations. No one could possibly enter without his permission. Other than Meng Hao and Yan'er, the only people on the mountain were various servant cultivators who had been assigned to work for him.

Meng Hao's performance in the Ninth Sect's Vast Expanse Shrine, and the matter with the Tenth Heaven, had already become somewhat of a legend. Furthermore, all of the disciples of the Ninth Sect had come to view him with complete awe and reverence.

Even all of the Chosen felt that way.

In the few days which followed the event, a constant stream of visitors came to pay respects. At first he met them individually, but soon there were simply too many, and he finally announced that he would be going into secluded meditation to restore his cultivation base. After that, he entrusted outside affairs to Yan'er.

Yan'er had no option other than to accept the arrangement. In the following days, all her time was taken up with receiving visitors from the sect. At first she was excited about the matter. After all, Fang Mu's rise to prominence meant that she instantly had a completely different status in the sect. Now she understood what it was like to be extremely popular.

She also was able to accept countless gifts, so many that they couldn't fit into a single bag of holding.

However, her mood gradually soured as she realized that the majority of people coming to visit her Master were female cultivators. Furthermore, it seemed like each one was prettier than the last, and all of them were

making discreet inquiries about her Master.

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1. It really only hit me at the last minute that this conflicts with the original description in chapter 1429, which also has ramifications on the information in 1428. Although it's theoretically possible to rationalize the discrepancy, I suspect it's a mistake on Er Gen's part. I don't have time to confirm that at the moment, so I'm going to put this on the list of things to analyze properly and/or fix at a later date.

Chapter 1475: Marriage Alliance!

“A bunch of fawning sycophants!” she thought. “Hmph! I can’t believe so many girls like my Master, that old fogey. As his disciple, I definitely have to keep things under control!” Yan’er took her mission very seriously. She was often less than polite to the female disciples. She would accept their gifts, but when it came to their veiled inquiries about her Master, she didn’t even respond.

The more charming and pretty the girls were, the more hostile Yan’er got. Oftentimes, after such a female cultivator left, she would look miserably down at her own body, and even stare at her face in the mirror. Then she would stamp her foot and stalk over to Meng Hao’s secluded meditation facilities to yell at him from outside.

It was on one particular day that she stood there, fists on her waist, cursing Meng Hao. “Master, why don’t you act like the old man you are!? Look at you! Don’t you have anything better to do than challenge the Vast Expanse Shrine? Do you know how many manly visitors you’ve had recently, all throwing themselves at you? Well, do you?!”

Meng Hao opened his eyes, looked out at the infuriated Yan’er, and smiled, somewhat curious about what she had just said.

“Manly?”

“Yeah. Manly women. Stout and sturdy, each and every one of them, all pimply-faced too. Women are supposed to have lovely voices right? But not them. If you want, I can bring them all over to see you here.” With that, she glared at the door of the meditation chamber. If Meng Hao dared to agree to such an offer, she would probably bite his head off like a vicious tiger.

A strange expression could be seen on Meng Hao’s face. Clearing his throat, he yelled, “Get back to cultivating. I’ve taught you a lot of divine abilities and Daoist magics. There’s the Dao of Reincarnation, the Heavengod Magic, and the Mountain Consuming Incantation. You never got them down right, so stop wasting time and get to work, alright?”

Then he closed his eyes and went back to meditating.

Yan'er snorted dramatically. Seeing that her Master was just going to continue on with cultivation, she stamped her feet and glared at the door one more time, then turned and walked away.

"Bad Master! Stinky Master! Crotchety old fogey! Shameless fossil!! Hmph! Mountain Consuming Incantation? Heavengod Magic? Dao of Reincarnation? I mastered all of those a long time ago. He's just coming up with excuses!" As she muttered to herself, she walked past the mastiff, who was sleeping just outside of the courtyard. When the mastiff heard her muttering, it opened its eyes, listened for a moment, then quickly closed its eyes and pretended to continue sleeping.

Time passed. Eventually, the number of disciples coming to visit began to decline. Just when Yan'er was about to breathe a sigh of relief, though, people from cultivator clans outside of the Vast Expanse School started to show up. There were quite a few of them, many of whom offered gifts in the form of beautiful servant girls. Yan'er was about to go mad, even more so than before.

Most intolerable was that, unexpectedly, there were some people who came to propose marriage alliances....

On one particular day, the 7-Essences Paragon who had helped Meng Hao during his tribulation brought a group of people to Meng Hao's mountain peak. Among that group was another 7-Essences Paragon. As the two Paragons chatted, they were followed closely by a young woman.

She carried herself gracefully, and was spectacularly beautiful. Although she had a somewhat arrogant look to her, she didn't seem too pleased to be here. However, she followed along as the two Paragons led her up the mountain.

"Yan'er, hurry and call your Master out," said the Ninth Sect Paragon, smiling. To him, Meng Hao was a very important person, and since Yan'er was his disciple, it was only natural that he speak respectfully to her.

Yan'er wasn't too pleased with the situation. She looked at the two Paragons, then the young woman, and her heart began to pound. Of all the

women she had seen recently, this girl was definitely the most beautiful.

Furthermore, her cultivation base was extraordinary, being in the early Ancient Realm.

For some reason, Yan'er started getting nervous. She nodded and ran over to Meng Hao's secluded meditation facilities, only to find that he had already emerged. If anyone else had come to visit, he would have refused to see them, but this particular Paragon had been of significant help during his tribulation, and he definitely couldn't refuse him.

Taking Yan'er with him, he headed to the audience hall, where the Ninth Sect Paragon laughed heartily upon catching sight of him.

"Fang Mu, please offer formal greetings to Paragon Streamcloud from the Third Sect."

The Paragon from the Third Sect looked closely at Meng Hao, obviously measuring him up. Then he smiled. Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever as he clasped hands and bowed.

After all the introductions were made, everyone sat down and began to chat. The beautiful young woman occasionally looked over at Meng Hao, her expression one of contempt, although she did a fairly good job of covering it up.

Yan'er sat next to Meng Hao, her dislike for the young woman growing by the moment. Then she heard the visiting Paragon explain that this girl was one of the Vast Expanse School's Holy Daughter-designates, and that he wanted her and Meng Hao to become Daoist partners. Yan'er couldn't control herself. Her mind spinning, she subconsciously blurted, "No way! My Master doesn't need a Daoist partner!"

As soon as the words left her mouth, she suddenly shivered, and her face drained of blood. She looked over at Meng Hao and immediately dropped to her knees to kowtow, heart filled with regret. She had no idea why she had suddenly blurted what she had, and was suddenly very nervous that she might have angered her Master.

"Master, my... my mistake...."

The Ninth Sect Paragon frowned, but before he could say anything, Paragon Streamcloud snorted, and his eyes turned cold. As for the Holy Daughter-designate, the scorn in her eyes deepened.

Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever. The arrival of these two Paragons hadn't ruffled him at all, and as for the matter of Daoist partnership, it was nothing surprising. His clone was incredibly famous in the Vast Expanse School, and was considered a Chosen among Chosen, the future pillar of the sect.

It was to be expected that people would propose marriage alliances and Daoist partnerships.

However, after hearing Yan'er's reaction, he couldn't hold back from smiling. He looked over at her, his expression warm, then flicked his sleeve to indicate that she should cease kowtowing.

"What mistake?" he said softly. "I never said you made any mistake." When she saw the kindness in his gaze, her heart shivered, and strange, warm emotions suddenly flooded through her.

With that, Meng Hao turned to the two Paragons, clasped hands and said, "Seniors, I'm indebted to you for the kindness you've shown. Truly, I'm very touched. However, I, Fang Mu, truly have no need of a Daoist partner."

"This...." The Ninth Sect Paragon frowned and looked over at Meng Hao. However, he could tell that his mind had been made up, and the Paragon had no desire to try to force the sect's most important Chosen to do anything. Then he looked over at Yan'er, and recalled the warmth in Meng Hao's gaze, and suddenly everything clicked. A strange expression appeared on his face.

Paragon Streamcloud's expression was very grim. He, Paragon Streamcloud, had already shown plenty of respect to this Fang Mu, and besides that, the young woman he had brought from his clan was a peerless beauty. Despite all that, Fang Mu unexpectedly refused the offer.

Pressure instantly began to weigh down in the room. Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever, but Yan'er looked frightened.

With a cold snort, Paragon Streamcloud turned and clasped hands to the Ninth Sect Paragon. Then he flicked his sleeve and turned to leave. As for the young woman, she ceased any attempt to conceal the scorn on her face. As she turned to leave, her expression was one of disdain.

Just as she was about to walk out the door, she looked back and muttered, "Illicit Master and apprentice romance. How utterly disgusting."

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Note from Deathblade: This is another relatively short chapter, coming in at about 1,400 words instead of the usual 2,000.

Chapter 1476: Of Course!

The words “illicit Master and apprentice romance” immediately caused Yan’er to shiver. Her face was completely ashen as she staggered backward a few steps.

The second half of what the young woman had said, “utterly disgusting”, was like a hammer blow to the pit of Yan’er’s stomach. Her mind was reeling; it was as if her most secret and hidden feelings had suddenly been dramatically revealed to everyone, as though things which had confused even her were now being proclaimed loudly for everyone to hear. It made Yan’er feel as if Heaven and Earth were suddenly spinning in reverse. She even coughed up a mouthful of blood.

“You....” she said, her vision swimming as she visibly shook. She simply didn’t know what to say.

In the instant that the words left the young woman’s mouth, a grim expression overtook Meng Hao’s face. He rose to his feet, and suddenly, incredible pressure exploded out, engulfing the young woman.

At the same time, Meng Hao took a step forward. When his foot landed, lands shook and mountains were rocked. The Holy Daughter-designate’s face fell; she had assumed Meng Hao was a soft and warm person, but in the blink of an eye, he had become like a vicious wild beast. His gaze, his energy, the pressure radiating off of him, made her feel as if she were about to be torn to pieces. Instantly, she began to tremble inwardly, and her scalp felt as if it would explode.

Paragon Streamcloud also frowned, and extended his hand as if to block Meng Hao’s way. However, in that exact moment, Meng Hao looked over at him and said, “Do you truly dare to block my way?!”

One gaze and one sentence from the mouth of an Ancient Realm cultivator was being used to threaten a 7-Essences Paragon. Anyone who saw this happening would find it inconceivable. It was an act of utter conceit, of complete audacity. It was like a praying mantis trying to stop a war chariot!

However, in that instant in which Meng Hao looked at him, Paragon Streamcloud felt something strange and mysterious rumbling inside his mind. It was something threatening, although it wasn't coming from Meng Hao's cultivation base. He felt a sensation of deadly crisis that caused all the hair on his body to stand on end, as though Meng Hao's gaze contained some mysterious, unfathomable power. It was the kind of power that one felt when one's superior was staring you in the eye.

It was very natural, completely lacking pretense and affectation, as though the person staring at him truly was the most powerful of experts. Even Streamcloud, a 7-Essences Paragon, felt like a weakling!

Even as his mind was sent reeling by a single glance Meng Hao's words entered his ears. They should be words that could be considered the biggest joke in the world. And yet, although Streamcloud got the feeling that this person was completely mad... he also felt thoroughly shaken.

"How is this even possible!?" he thought. His mind was in chaos, and he felt so ashamed he was about to fly into a rage. Anyone with his position would feel the same way in such circumstances. However, even as his eyes flickered with coldness and he prepared to do something to Meng Hao, the Ninth Sect's 7-Essences Paragon snorted coldly and stepped forward to block his path.

A boom rang out, and the two of them backed away from each other. The Ninth Sect's Paragon then spoke in a coldly sinister voice that echoed out in all directions.

"Fellow Daoist Streamcloud. What exactly did this disciple of your Third Sect mean just now? We're in the Ninth Sect at the moment, so you had better be prepared to give us a good explanation!" The Ninth Sect's Paragon was infuriated. The fact that no marriage alliance had been formed didn't really matter. This disciple couldn't possibly have said what she had said by accident; it was clearly an intentional insult. Whether or not what she said was true, Fang Mu had an illustrious name and position, yet she had openly condemned him, and had used vile and biting words to do so.

The Ninth Sect Paragon's heart burned with rage, and he bitterly regretted taking the initiative to invite Paragon Streamcloud for a visit.

Meanwhile, Meng Hao looked away from Paragon Streamcloud and strode up to the Holy Daughter-designate, who was edging backward. The pressure weighing down on her only continued to grow more intense. With a muffled squeak, she began performing an incantation gesture to try defend herself. As for Meng Hao, his face was extremely grim as he reached his hand back and slapped the girl across the face.

A smacking sound rang out, and the girl screamed. A huge welt rose up on her cheek, and she even flew off the ground from the force of the blow.

Before she could land, Meng Hao's fury at her insult caused him to unleash another slap. Another smacking sound rang out from the other side of the girl's face. Blood sprayed out of her mouth, and she screamed again. By now her face was in a sorry state, and completely spattered in blood.

"Get the hell out of here, NOW!" he roared, eyes flickering with killing intent. Despite how vile the young woman's words were, with his true self out of the sect, Meng Hao knew that if he killed her, it would start a war between the Third and Ninth Sects.

However, it wouldn't do to just let things drop, so even as the words left his mouth, he crushed the young woman's Dao heart, planting a seed of fear inside of her.

Paragon Streamcloud tried to stop it from happening, but the Ninth Sect Paragon prevented him. Their clash caused a huge boom to echo out, after which the Ninth Sect Paragon's face turned very grim, and he echoed Meng Hao's words.

"Get the hell out of here, NOW!"

The Ninth Sect's power had been rising ever since Meng Hao became the Ninth Paragon, and its forces were tougher. A cold gleam could be seen in the eyes of the Ninth Sect Paragon, and he followed up with, "If I hear any word of this spreading, or hear about you defaming the name of the Ninth Sect's qilin son, then our two sects will definitely be having a

war.”

Paragon Streamcloud could merely chuckle coldly. There was little else to say, considering that everything that had just occurred resulted from an insult on the part of his own clan member.

Glaring spitefully at the young woman, he grabbed her and then shot off in a beam of prismatic light.

After they were gone, things were peaceful and quiet again. The 7-Essences Paragon hesitated for a moment, smiling wryly at Meng Hao. Then he looked over at Yan’er, who stood there head bowed, speechless.

After a moment of thought, he looked back at Meng Hao and said, “Fang Mu, you have an apprentice with a lot of latent potential there. You know, in all my years of cultivation, I’ve never had my own personal disciple. What do you say if I take the girl as my apprentice?”

His words caused Yan’er to shiver.

Meng Hao shook his head, his gaze resolute. “Many thanks for your good intentions, Paragon.”

The Paragon looked at Meng Hao and sighed inwardly. Without another word, he turned and left.

The mountain peak was very quiet now, except for the whispering of the wind. Meng Hao walked over to Yan’er and bopped her head. Expression warm, he said, “Why are you so upset? She ran her mouth and so I slapped her a couple times. It’s over now. My murderous aura crushed her Dao heart, and she won’t ever dare to make irresponsible remarks ever again. If you still feel like venting, then focus on your cultivation, and you’ll be able to go take care of her yourself one day.”

Yan’er bowed her head. Placing her hands on her cheeks, she looked up at him through fluttering eyelashes, embarrassed and unsure of what exactly to say.

“Master, I...” She knew that she should say something, she just couldn’t find the words.

Meng Hao smiled and bopped her on the head again. "Alright, alright. Why don't you go prepare some spirit fruit, Master is getting a bit hungry."

Then he headed back toward his secluded meditation facilities.

Yan'er stood there for a moment, a blank expression on her face. Finally, she stamped her foot. Rubbing the sore spot where he had bopped her head, she hurried off to prepare some spirit fruit.

Before long, dusk had fallen. Gradually, the light faded from the sky, and the moon rose. Moonlight flowed across the landscape like water, and although everything looked like it usually did, there was a lonely beauty to it that usually wasn't seen.

Yan'er had just arrived at Meng Hao's secluded meditation facilities. When she placed the spirit fruit in front of him, he opened his eyes and smiled at her. Seeing the confused blankness in her expression, he couldn't help but sigh.

"Yan'er," he said softly. She seemed to be in such a daze that she didn't even hear him.

"Yan'er!" he repeated, even louder this time.

"Huh?" she replied, looking up at him.

He sighed again. After a moment of silence, he stood and walked to the doorway, where he looked up at the night sky, and the moon.

"Yan'er," he said softly, "do you remember when you were young, and I brought you here to the sect?"

"I remember...." she said, recalling the scene. She remembered that back then, she had suspected her Master of being a fraud, a belief that had persisted for some time even after arriving in the sect. Now that she thought back to the matter, she couldn't help but smile. As the moonlight fell upon her young face, she seemed even more beautiful than ever.

Meng Hao looked at her, and then said, "Master is going to tell you a story."

His gaze was soft, and seemed to contain many memories, memories from a time long before young Yan'er had even been alive. That was because he was about to tell her a story that came from far, far back in the stream of time.

“Once upon a time, there was a place called the Mountain and Sea Realm, where there was a heavenly body known as Planet South Heaven....”

“On Planet South Heaven there was a place called Mount Daqing....”

“... That young man joined the Reliance Sect, and met a Chosen there named Wang Tengfei.”

“... And that was the first time he ever saw her. At that time, she was Wang Tengfei's fiancée.”

“... That roc was so huge that when it flew, it filled the sky. It created a huge windstorm that swept her up along with him. They ended up inside a forbidden volcano together....”

“In the Violet Fate Sect, they became fellow disciples....”

“On the day he got married, she stood next to his wife looking at him, thinking that he didn't notice her....”

“Later, she left with her Master Pill Demon, and went to the Kunlun Society....”

“In the Windswept Realm, she damaged her own soul to help him. She paid the ultimate price, and yet had no regrets....”

“He came to the Kunlun Society and saw her corpse. Then he used a timeshift magic to find her soul. On that day, his heart broke....”

“He searched for her in the Eighth Mountain and Sea, but was unable to find her.... However, he knew that he owed her the debt of a lifetime....” Meng Hao told Yan'er the entire story. It took a long, long time. He spoke through the entire night, and it wasn't until the sun began to rise that he finally finished.

At the beginning, Yan'er listened a bit absent-mindedly, but the longer

the story went on, the more pain she felt inside, although she wasn't sure why. It was as if there was something slowly awakening in her heart.

When Meng Hao finished the story, she simply sat there with a blank expression on her face. A long time passed....

Then she looked up and quietly asked, "Master, what was the name of the girl in the story?"

Meng Hao looked off into the sunrise and replied, "Her name was... Chu Yuyan."

"Is there more to the story?" Yan'er asked.

Meng Hao sat there quietly for a moment, then nodded. "Do you want to hear it?"

Yan'er shivered, and didn't say anything for a while. However, the confusion gradually faded from her eyes. Soon she looked like she always did, simple and carefree. She finally turned back to him and shook her head. "I don't want to hear it now. But one day... if I do want to hear the rest of the story, will you tell it to me, Master?"

"Of course!"

Chapter 1477: Provoking the Ninth Sect

In the starry sky some distance away from Planet Vast Expanse, were three spinning vortexes. They maintained their position there, fixed for all eternity, radiating pulses of mysterious light.

The pulses of light were primarily dim and gray, as if they represented an aura of death. However, occasionally one could see radiant flashes of brightness meandering between the three vortexes.

Meng Hao's true self hovered outside of the three vortexes, hair floating about him. He was miniscule in size compared to them, and yet his energy was mighty enough that he could stand as their equal. In fact, the vortexes even vibrated with hostility.

According to what Meng Hao could sense, this was one of the locations that housed a copper mirror shard. He opened his third eye, and instantly the fog that made up the vortexes was lifted, revealing the true nature of what was beneath.

He saw that inside the three vortexes were three worlds. There were no cultivators, only dangerous, deadly terrain and numerous beasts the likes of which he had never seen before. There were also a few extremely brutal auras which were comparable to the 9-Essences level.

The most shocking and powerful fluctuations came from the second portal. Some sort of ancient entity inside, the master of the place, who was at the peak of 9-Essences.

Closer examination revealed the source of those fluctuations: it was an enormous, planet-sized... basilisk lizard!

All of the lands of that world apparently existed on the surface of that basilisk, and according to what Meng Hao could sense, the copper mirror shard was inside its body!

His eyes glittered as he transformed into a beam of light that shot directly toward the giant basilisk in the second vortex.

Moments later, shocking booms echoed out into the starry sky.

Meanwhile, back on Planet Vast Expanse, Meng Hao's clone was once again deep in secluded meditation. Yan'er was back to her old self, with no confusion or blankness because of what had occurred. She was as lively and energetic as ever, and continued to reject all of the female disciples who came to meet her Master.

However, when she was alone at night, she would look up at the moon and think about the story her master had told her about Chu Yuyan. The story stirred her heart, and gradually, was causing a resonance to form with her past life.

Time passed. Meng Hao's clone received fewer and fewer visitors, finally giving Yan'er some time to practice cultivation. However, the fact that Meng Hao was the first person to summon the Tenth Heaven in the Vast Expanse Shrine incited challenges from the Chosen of the other sects.

Their method of issuing their challenge was simple. Instead of going to the Vast Expanse Shrines in their own sects, they came to the Ninth Sect.

In the Vast Expanse School, there was no rule preventing disciples from doing that. In fact, such things had occurred before in the past. However, it wasn't common, and usually only happened under special circumstances.

After all, challenging the Vast Expanse Shrine in a rival sect was like knocking on someone's door and then kicking them in the shin. It was essentially a blatant provocation.

However, the fact that Meng Hao had summoned the Tenth Heaven instigated a huge stir. The Chosen who qualified to be in the top 10 in all the other sects were only able to maintain their silence for a short time before exploding into action. Then, they marched into the ninth land mass... to challenge the Ninth Sect's Vast Expanse Shrine.

From the very first day, the sound of bells began to ring out. Virtually every day following that, the same thing occurred; the bell toll of the Vast Expanse Shrine filled the air.

The Chosen from the other eight sects took turns. It started with the Third Sect, who sent eight people over. Each one of those eight fought

their way into the top 100, and two of them made it into the top 10. The highest spot attained was only 4th place, but that was still in the top 10.

Next came the people from the Fourth Sect. Then the Second Sect, and the Fifth.

The result of having the Chosen from all those other sects challenge the Ninth Sect's Vast Expanse Shrine was that of the top 30 spots, only six were held by disciples of the Ninth Sect!

But then the Sixth Sect came, after which the Seventh and Eighth Sects arrived. Then, those six spots became five.

The situation was still somewhat tolerable, but then the First Sect came, hell-bent on coming out on top. After their efforts, only four spots within the top 30 belonged to the Ninth Sect. In addition to that, numerous Heavens were summoned.

Although no one summoned the Tenth Heaven, only the Sixth, it was still a shocking development.

Of course, no one was able to take the 1st place spot from Meng Hao, but directly beneath him in the top 30 were numerous powerful experts from other sects. To the disciples of the Ninth Sect, it was a great humiliation, almost as if their sect were being trampled beneath the feet of others.

It all led to quite an uproar. There were many arguments, and soon anger boiled over to the point that small-scale conflicts erupted. However, the overall situation couldn't be changed. Chosen from the other eight sects didn't seem to care at all about their own Vast Expanse Shrines, and were instead obsessed with challenging the one in the Ninth Sect.

Gradually, months went by. Roughly nine hundred of the top 1,000 spots in the Ninth Sect came to be occupied by disciples from other sects. The Ninth Sect was left with only about one hundred spots.

The sect itself was powerless to do anything to stop the situation, short of physically preventing the other Chosen from coming. However, if they did that, it would seem like they were nervous, even fearful of the challenges being issued by the other sects' Chosen.

Considering how powerful the Ninth Sect was at the moment, they would never deign do that. The Chosen of the Ninth Sect wouldn't agree to something like that; they had their pride, after all.

Because of the challenges from the other Chosen, and the fact that their spots on the Vast Expanse Shrine were continuing to shrink, the Ninth Sect slipped into a state of frenzy.

Virtually all of the Chosen, and even the ordinary disciples, went all-out in their practice of cultivation. They took more outside missions and participated in more trials by fire. Only by increasing the levels of their cultivation base could they earn higher spots. As they grew stronger, it was without hesitation that they went on to re-challenge their own Vast Expanse Shrine.

It was as if all of the Chosen in the entire Vast Expanse School had picked the Vast Expanse Shrine in the Ninth Sect to be their joint trial by fire. Only by having their names on that list could they be truly illustrious.

The trend didn't stop. A year later, the battleground among Chosen expanded to include the top 2,000 spots.

After another year, it was the top 3,000 spots.

The disciples of the Ninth Sect were fuming, and conflicts broke out constantly. During the three years which had passed, people often came to pay respects to Meng Hao and ask that he do something.

But Meng Hao was in secluded meditation and wouldn't take visitors. The disciples of the Ninth Sect could understand that, but it didn't stop the Chosen from the other sects from virtually going crazy. That was especially true of those who held spots in the Ninth Sect's top 3,000. As for the few hundred from the Ninth Sect who remained in that group, their madness also increased.

Rumors even started to spread that Fang Mu had only been trying to get famous. People claimed that what had happened three years before was a mere fluke, and that now he didn't dare to show his face.

At first, such rumors were only whispered here and there. But after two

years passed, and the other sects occupied ninety percent of the top 10,000 spots on the Ninth Sect's Vast Expanse Shrine, the rumors raged like wildfire.

It got to the point that the entire Vast Expanse School was talking about the matter.

"What happened with Fang Mu that year was a quirk, that's all. He's been in secluded meditation for five years and has never come out. Obviously, our challenge has him scared and hiding!"

"Even if it wasn't a fluke, I heard that after he summoned the Tenth Heaven, he experienced a Tribulation. He probably got seriously injured...."

"I got my hands on some verified information that Fang Mu was injured so badly his cultivation base won't make any progress within a hundred years! In fact, it's even regressing!"

More and more rumors spread. The disciples of the Ninth Sect were so protective of Fang Mu's name that it even led to blows on some occasions. However, the Ninth Sect was only one of nine sects, so no matter what they did, it was impossible to sway the opinions of the Chosen of the entire Vast Expanse School.

Eventually, most people came to believe the rumors. At the same time, it became completely commonplace for the cultivators of the other sects to come to the Vast Expanse Shrine in the Ninth Sect to earn their name.

Another five years passed. Meng Hao had been in secluded meditation for ten years. The conflicts over the Ninth Sect's Vast Expanse Shrine had reached a boiling point. Of the top 30,000 names, only 4,000 belonged to the Ninth Sect.

Their own Vast Expanse Shrine had been occupied by others, leaving the disciples of the Ninth Sect feeling completely humiliated and in a state of madness. Shockingly, it reached the point where the top 10... contained only two Chosen from the Ninth Sect!

Other than Meng Hao in 1st place and another Chosen in 5th place, the rest of the spots were taken by Chosen from other sects!

The humiliation and the conflicts worsened.

And yet, the Paragons of the Ninth Sect and all the other sects didn't stop any of it from happening. As long as the conflicts didn't get too out of hand, then it was viewed as a way for the overall power of the Vast Expanse School to increase. That was especially true of the disciples of the Ninth Sect, who had produced far more Chosen in the past ten years because of that pressure.

Increasing numbers of disciples came to Meng Hao's mountain to try to persuade him to do something. At one point, more than 10,000 disciples all went at the same time.

Yan'er was very annoyed by everything that was happening. Her cultivation had advanced by leaps and bounds in the past ten years, and although she wasn't even close to catching up to Meng Hao, she was in the Dao Seeking stage, very close to her Immortal Tribulation.

One day when meditating, she was forced to open her eyes because of the cacophonous clamor outside the mountain.

"Eldest Brother, please come down from your mountain!!"

"Eldest Brother, the Ninth Sect only has a few thousand spots in the Vast Expanse Shrine's top 30,000. Please come down!!"

"Eldest Brother, rumors are flying everywhere. People are accusing you of things. Eldest Brother.... Come down from the mountain! Our frustration has been building for ten years, and we need your help to vent it!!"

Yan'er frowned. During the past ten years, she had watched in frustration as the other sects continuously challenged and provoked the Ninth Sect. She had asked her Master about the matter, but he didn't seem to care much. Furthermore, in recent years he had come to approach a critical juncture in his cultivation, and told Yan'er not to bother him about the matter any more.

"So annoying!" she thought. "What's wrong with these people, don't they have their own Vast Expanse Shrine to challenge? What's the point in

showing off in the Ninth Sect?” With a cold harrumph, she walked out of her room to go console all of the fellow disciples who had come to pay respects to her Master.

As soon as she walked out, though, she frowned. Among the people who had come to visit, there were many unfamiliar faces. There were even Chosen from other sects, who by this point had begun to treat the Ninth Sect as if it were their own home, and were staring at her with cold smiles.

Chapter 1478: The Third Mirror Shard

The disciples of the Ninth Sect had originally wanted to join forces and kill the people from the other sects, but Ninth Sect's leadership, including its Paragon, had prevented that from happening.

In the final analysis, the Ninth Sect was part of the group of nine sects that made up the Vast Expanse School, not an independent entity. It was true that the Ninth Sect's expansion and growth in the outside was a terrifying thing to the other sects, and the sheer number of cultivators who made up their forces there was fear-inspiring.

But in the end, the Ninth Sect... had not split off from the Vast Expanse School to be independent.

Also, the Ninth Sect was actually benefiting from the matter with the Vast Expanse Shrine. Not only did the Ninth Sect have more disciples in the rankings than any other individual sect, but the way the disciples fought even harder because of the humiliation also led to spectacular results.

Most importantly, the disciples of the Ninth Sect had become completely united. The fighting and scheming which had once gone on between them was now mostly a thing of the past, and they were completely unified against the outside forces.

It wasn't that the other sects didn't realize this. They were also benefiting from the current situation, and were content to let things play out.

Of course, the main reason... was that the Vast Expanse School's 9-Essences Paragons still hadn't returned after ten years. Except for Meng Hao, who was out searching for the copper mirror shards, the rest were still inside the necropolis.

Because of all of these varied reasons, as long as the cultivators from the other sects didn't violate any of the Ninth Sect's rules, they were allowed to set up camp in the Ninth Sect.

Of course, that stipulation didn't apply to everyone, only to the people who held a spot on the Ninth Sect's Vast Expanse Shrine. It was essentially an unwritten rule, and it ensured that if the Ninth Sect's disciples wanted to drive away the intruders, they simply had to occupy all the spots on their own sect's Vast Expanse Shrine.

Currently, Yan'er had just emerged from the mountain where Meng Hao was secluded in meditation. When she saw the numerous cultivators from other sects looking at her coldly, her expression was calm. Then she looked at her fellow disciples of the Ninth Sect, smiled, and proceeded to placate them, reminding them that her master was at a critical juncture in his secluded meditation.

The disciples who had come to beg Meng Hao to emerge were just as zealously devoted to him as they had been ten years ago. Regardless of the rumors flying about, they felt exactly the same way. That, coupled with Yan'er's placating words, ensured that they quickly calmed down. However, it was at this point that a cultivator from one of the other sects walked out from the crowd, a cold smile on his face.

"Well, you certainly have a way with words, girl. You have a measly Dao Seeking cultivation base, and yet you managed to placate all these people. Well let me tell you, to the rest of us, all you're doing is intimidating people in the name of your master, like the fox who exploited the tiger's might to cow the jungle.

"Since your master doesn't dare to leave his mountain, do you dare to challenge the Vast Expanse Shrine?

"Or how about this, what if we hurt you? Then will your master dare to stick his head out of the turtle shell he's hiding in?" The cultivators from the other sects started laughing sarcastically. The disciples of the Ninth Sect bristled with rage, and it seemed like a fight might break out at any moment.

Ten years ago, Yan'er might have gotten mad, but she was different now. She had grown up, and therefore, her response to the provocation was to laugh. At the same time, her gaze turned icy cold. These cultivators from

the others sects weren't in the Immortal Realm, but rather, the Ancient Realm, and yet when she spoke to them, she seemed completely indifferent to that.

"When I was younger," she said calmly, "there were many things about life I didn't understand. Once, I took a trip to a local bazaar, and was kidnapped by a cultivator from the Eighth Sect, who wanted to use me as a cultivation vessel." When Yan'er began to speak, the cultivators from the other sects were wondering what her point was, and they frowned slightly, but continued to stare at her coldly.

"In the Eighth Sect, the cultivator who had kidnapped me slapped me across the face, which hurt quite a bit. My master then requested that the Ninth Paragon interfere. He ended up slaughtering quite a few members of Patriarch Chi Feng's clan, as well as other powerful experts who had stood by mocking me. Back then, I didn't really understand everything that was happening, but later on I realized that among the people killed were cultivators of the Ancient Realm and the Dao Realm. There were even Dao Lords. Oh. There was a Dao Sovereign too." She smiled slightly. At this point, complete silence prevailed.

"Because of what happened, my Master felt a bit useless, like he couldn't even protect his own apprentice. That was why he chose to challenge the Vast Expanse Shrine, to make a name for himself, and to ensure that no one would ever dare to bully me, his apprentice.

"The result was that he took first place in the Vast Expanse Shrine, and summoned the Tenth Heaven." Although she was smiling as she spoke, her words caused the eyes of the surrounding cultivators to go wide. Before this moment, none of them had known that the reason Fang Mu challenged the Vast Expanse Shrine was because his apprentice had been bullied.

The disciples from the other sect looked on with flickering expressions. Although they had been willing to open their mouths earlier, the truth was that they really were scared of Meng Hao.

"Oh right. There was one time when a Paragon from some other sect, I

forget which one, brought a girl from his clan here to visit. She said something to offend me, and regardless of the fact that a Paragon was present, my Master slapped her twice across the face, and even crushed her Dao heart.

“So if you really want my master to come out and destroy you, then go ahead. I’m standing right here. I won’t even dodge your blow.” She smiled a beautiful smile, but when the cultivators from the other sects saw it, their hearts began to pound.

She stood there a moment amidst the silence, then spoke once again in a powerful voice, “If you don’t have the guts to do that, then please screw the hell off!”

With that, she turned and headed back to the mountain.

After Yan’er left, the disciples of the Ninth Sect laughed mockingly at the other cultivators, then slowly dispersed. The cultivators from the other sects had extremely unsightly expressions on their faces as they also left.

Many people bore witness to the event, even Meng Hao, who was watching from within his secluded meditation facilities. After the matter concluded, he closed his eyes and paid the matter no further heed, continuing on with the same thing he had been doing for the past ten years: extinguish his Immortal Soul Lamps, one by one.

By this point, he had extinguished about ninety percent of them. There were now only ten that remained lit. However, without the right circumstances, it wasn’t a simple task to accomplish.

As for his true self, acquiring the third mirror shard hadn’t gone very smoothly. Not only did the giant basilisk lizard have battle prowess comparable to Meng Hao’s true self, it was also exceedingly crafty. Eventually, it had swallowed Meng Hao, whereupon the battle between them was fought via their souls.

After ten years, the soul battle was still raging.

Back on Planet Vast Expanse, Meng Hao’s clone murmured, “Soon enough. My true self should be able to suppress that basilisk within a few

more months, and acquire the third mirror shard.”

With that, he immersed himself in the task of extinguishing his Soul Lamps.

A few months later, out in the starry sky of the Vast Expanse, rumbling sounds could be heard in the second of the group of three vortexes. A massive howl of pain then echoed out, along with an explosive burst of energy. Within the vortex, the huge lizard’s body was twisting and turning as sounds like that of thunder echoed out from inside of it.

Before long, the basilisk roared, spitting out a burst of qi that became a windstorm. The vortex distorted, and a figure appeared.

It was none other than Meng Hao’s true self. Black armor covered his arm, and within his hand, a mirror shard was melting. It fused into the armor, which began to expand, growing even stronger than before.

The basilisk glared at Meng Hao, then roared again as it fell back in retreat. Even after ten years, it had failed to crush Meng Hao. In the end, had been injured and defeated, and robbed of its mirror shard.

As the basilisk watched Meng Hao’s energy rise, a glint of fear could be seen in its eyes.

“You got the treasure, why haven’t you left yet!?” the basilisk asked, its voice ancient, and its divine will so powerful that everything in the area shook.

Meng Hao’s true self glanced over at the basilisk, an arrogant gleam in his eyes. The basilisk was strong, stronger even than the Sect Leader and Bai Wuchen. Of all the peak 9-Essences experts Meng Hao’s true self had ever faced, this lizard was by far the strongest.

Were that not the case, it wouldn’t have taken him ten years to get the mirror shard.

After the mirror shard fused fully into the armor, Meng Hao faced the basilisk, his eyes glittering.

“If you wish,” he said, “you can leave this place and be my servant for a

thousand years.”

The basilisk stared in shock, then began to laugh, killing intent swirling in its eyes. “Say that after you Transcend, and maybe I might just agree.”

Although it feared Meng Hao, he did not possess battle prowess equivalent to a Transcendent cultivator, so the idea of being his servant for a thousand years was laughable.

Meng Hao didn’t seem offended. He gave the basilisk a profound look, and smiled slightly.

“Fine, it’s settled. I’ll come back for you later.” With that, he turned and shot off into the distance. The lizard looked at him with disdain, turning a deaf ear to his words. After Meng Hao left, it closed its eyes and went back to sleep.

Meng Hao’s true self sped through the starry sky, using the three mirror shards to detect the fluctuations of the fourth, which he immediately headed toward.

Meanwhile, back on the ninth continent of Planet Vast Expanse, in the Ninth Sect, on the mountain which belonged to Meng Hao’s clone, Yan’er was preparing to face her Immortal Tribulation.

Her Tribulation was different from Meng Hao’s. It was not monumentally shocking, but was more like the Tribulations faced by everyone else. Meng Hao didn’t help her; he simply stood off to the side watching.

Lightning crashed constantly as Yan’er completely transformed from mortal to Immortal. As it happened, she became even more beautiful, and her aura became more otherworldly. Meng Hao was shocked as he realized that her appearance now reminded him even more of Chu Yuyan.

The Immortal Tribulation lasted for three days. In the end, the Tribulation Lightning faded away, and Yan’er emanated Immortal qi. Her Immortal meridians were fully opened, and as she hovered in midair, she looked like a celestial goddess. Finally, she turned to Meng Hao and smiled.

“Master, I’ve achieved Immortal Ascension. Aren’t you going to give me a gift?”

Meng Hao smiled and shook his head in amusement. Although he looked young physically, the air he exuded made him seem profoundly ancient. His gaze was soft as he pulled out the gift he had prepared, and yet Yan’er shook her head in refusal. A crafty glint in her eyes, she said, “I don’t want any magical items or medicinal pills or techniques. I just want to see my Master... see you... once again on top of a mountain, smiling at me.”

Meng Hao was taken aback as he realized that he wasn’t sure if he was looking at Yan’er or... Chu Yuyan.

Chapter 1479: Stepping On All the Sects' Shrines!

Meng Hao stood there silently.

When he saw Chu Yuyan's soul, he had decided to pay the debt he owed her by means of a Master and apprentice relationship. But now he wasn't sure if that was the right decision.

He couldn't pretend to hold any feelings in his heart other than his thirst for revenge for the Mountain and Sea Realm. He desired the Mountain and Sea Butterfly, and desired to unearth the secrets which were buried within the starry sky of the Vast Expanse.

The only thing he wanted for Chu Yuyan was to protect her, and to give her... the best of everything.

He had no desire to see her hurt, and only wanted her to be happy.

Therefore, he stood there silently, which in turn caused Yan'er to start to get nervous. She gnawed on her lip, wondering if she had said or done something wrong. Unsure of what to do, she also just stood there, looking at Meng Hao, the seemingly young old man....

Meng Hao was a bit in a daze. Time passed. Soon it was dawn. A few days ago, some disciples had challenged the Vast Expanse Shrine, and although no one made it into the top 10, the Ninth Sect Chosen who occupied the 13th and 17th places were supplanted. That in turn caused conflicts to break out between the Ninth Sect disciples and the disciples from the other sects. As a result, an even larger group of disciples from the Ninth Sect came to Meng Hao's mountain, to ask him to do something.

"Eldest Brother, please come down from your mountain!!"

"Eldest Brother, come down from the mountain...."

"Eldest Brother... please come down!!" More and more such calls filled the air. There were tens of thousands of disciples gathered around Meng

Hao's mountain, all hoping to catch a glimpse of him, that dazzling figure from ten years ago. They had come here in good faith, filled with ardor and hope.

In recent days, increasing numbers of slanderous and salacious rumors about Fang Mu had been spread, until everyone in the Vast Expanse School was talking about them. Despite that, the disciples of the Ninth Sect did not waver in their devotion to him. They felt insulted and enraged, and they only hoped that their Eldest Brother... would make a vicious counter-attack.

As their voices grew louder, Yan'er bowed her head, looking more upset than before. But then Meng Hao's absentmindedness faded away, and he looked softly at her. He reached out and, just as he had when she was a child, he bopped her head.

"Alright," he said, smiling.

Her eyes widened as she looked up at him. Then she saw his smile, and it was like looking at the bright, blue sky. Her eyes began to shine, and she began to jump up and down in excitement.

"Master, Master!" she exclaimed excitedly. "I know exactly what you should do. Why don't you go back to the Vast Expanse Shrine and summon the Tenth Heaven again?" She was hoping that such an act would be a powerful blow against the cultivators from the other sects.

"What would be the point in that?" Meng Hao asked, shaking his head. Then he swished his sleeve and began to walk down the mountain.

Yan'er followed on his heels. "What do you mean? What are you going to do, Master?"

In the years that had passed, Yan'er had grown much more mature. In public, she was a responsible adult who could take charge. But in front of Meng Hao, she was like a little girl.

Meng Hao didn't answer her question. After stepping off the mountain, the crowd of tens of thousands of disciples outside saw him, and instantly exploded in excitement. At once, a huge cheer echoed out.

As for the cultivators from the other sects, they had originally assumed that this day would be like all the others, in which Fang Mu remained hidden away. But then they saw who had just emerged, and their hearts trembled.

Meng Hao's fame was such that, despite the passage of ten years, he was just as impressive as before. The disciples from the other sects felt their minds spinning, and they began to pant. Without any hesitation, they produced jade slips which they used to inform the other top Chosen from their various sects of what was happening.

Within moments, the news of Meng Hao coming down from the mountain spread like a blast of wind through the Ninth Sect. Countless disciples from the Ninth Sect, after ten years of stifling pressure, were thrown into excitement. After ten long years, many of them had begun to grumble inwardly at Meng Hao, but now that vanished, and they all dropped what they were doing and flew out to see him.

"Eldest Brother came down off the mountain?"

"Eldest Brother left the mountain!!"

"Hahaha! The day has finally arrived! Eldest Brother came down from the mountain, and now he's going to crush everyone!"

More and more people began rushing toward the area from all directions. The crowd quickly grew from tens of thousands to a hundred thousand. Then a million. Then several million....

Beams of light shot toward Meng Hao's mountain in seemingly endless fashion.

The Chosen from the other sects that weren't in the area were also notified via jade slip, and began to pant, their eyes shining brightly. For ten years they had been provoking the Ninth Sect. For ten years they had been trying... to force Meng Hao to do something. That was the only chance they had to potentially destroy the legend that he had created.

"Fang Mu! He's finally come off the mountain!" In the location in the Ninth Sect which had been occupied by the First Sect, a gray-haired young

man could be seen. He took a deep breath, and his eyes began to shine brightly. More and more people emerged, clustering around him as he flew up into the sky.

In the location where the Second Sect had set up camp, a woman could be seen. She rose to her feet, looking like she wanted to fight. Blood boiling, she shot up into the air. “After ten years of waiting, you’d better not disappoint me, Fang Mu!”

Chosen from all of the outside sects were in an uproar. All of them wanted to go out and challenge Meng Hao to a fight immediately.

“Ten years ago you created a legend. Now that ten years have passed, I’m going to destroy that legend!”

“I worked myself to the bone for ten years, and now I’m completely prepared. I’m definitely going to surpass Fang Mu!”

“Everyone says that Fang Mu is injured. This time is definitely my opportunity to shine!”

The entire Ninth Sect was boiling. Countless cultivators were gathering around Meng Hao’s mountain as he stood there, looking out at the crowds with a light smile. Finally, he clasped hands and bowed deeply to everyone.

Before he could say anything, everyone shouted out, “Eldest Brother!”

The sound of their voices was like a shockwave that caused the Heavens to shake.

Yan’er stood next to Meng Hao, glowing with excitement.

Meng Hao looked around at the crowds, and the Chosen from the other sects, who stood a bit further away. Smiling, he said, “Yan’er, you just asked me what I’m going to do...? I’m going to take you sightseeing!”

When Yan’er heard that, she looked surprised. But before she could respond, Meng Hao waved his sleeve and flew up into the air. Instantly, his voice rang out for all to hear.

“Fellow Daoists,” he said, eyes glittering, “please come with me to the Eighth Sect. The Seventh Sect. The Sixth Sect.... In fact, we will go all the

way to the First Sect. I'm curious to see what their Vast Expanse Shrines look like." This was his gift to Yan'er, and also a breakthrough he had to make after taking his Soul Lamps to the pinnacle.

In response to his words, the disciples of the Ninth Sect went quiet, but then, they let out a Heaven-shaking, Earth-shattering roar.

Everyone was screaming and hollering in excitement. Even the Ninth Sect's 7-Essences Paragon chuckled as he looked on from his position on his mountain.

"Well, if that's your plan, then allow me to help out a bit," he murmured. "These kids have been bottled up for far too long as it is." Shaking his head, the Paragon smiled and waved his hand. Instantly, massive rumbling could be heard as a gigantic spell formation appeared.

Teleportation power began to emanate out, and Meng Hao flashed into motion, shooting toward the portal. Yan'er followed close behind, bolstered by the power of Meng Hao's cultivation base.

At the same time, the excited disciples of the Ninth Sect took to flight toward the portal. The disciples from the other sects stared in shock for a moment, their faces a bit ashen after the words Meng Hao had just uttered. However, they also took to flight toward the spell formation.

Rumbling echoed out as the teleportation power activated. Everything shook, and the group vanished. When they reappeared, they were on the eighth continent, above the Eighth Sect.

The sudden arrival of so many people shook the whole Eighth Sect. Eighth Sect disciples looked up in surprise as Meng Hao addressed the Eighth Sect.

"I am Fang Mu of the Ninth Sect. I've come today to challenge the Eighth Sect's Vast Expanse Shrine!"

Even as his voice continued to echo back and forth, and before any of the disciples of the Eighth Sect had a chance to react, Meng Hao and Yan'er flew toward the Vast Expanse Shrine. The Eighth Sect had no means or method to stop them. After all, Chosen from all the other sects

had challenged the Ninth Sect's Vast Expanse Shrine on countless occasions over the last ten years.

Yan'er followed Meng Hao excitedly through the crowds of countless Eighth Sect disciples as he headed directly toward their Vast Expanse Shrine. Soon, they were standing at the foot of the mountain.

Meng Hao looked over at Yan'er and said, "Yan'er, would you like to come with me?"

Yan'er's jaw dropped, and her heart began to pound so hard she felt like she was hyperventilating. She simply stood there, in a daze. She had merely said she wanted to see her Master standing on top of a mountain. She had never even guessed that he would bring her here. But then she remembered how he had just said he would take her sightseeing.

"I... I..." she stammered.

"Don't want to go?" he asked.

"I do!!" she cried, worried that he might not take her after all.

He laughed heartily, then turned and began to walk toward the Vast Expanse Shrine. Yan'er followed. With his protection, even a place as dangerous as a dragon's pool or a tiger's den would be safe for her!

As Meng Hao led Yan'er up to the Eighth Sect's Vast Expanse Shrine, over a hundred million disciples from the Ninth Sect began to cheer. As for the disciples of the Eighth Sect, they didn't look very happy. Soon, the sound of a tolling bell could be heard. It rang once. Twice. Three times. Four times... it didn't stop!

As the bell tolled, Meng Hao took Yan'er up the mountain. 10,000 steps. 30,000 steps. 70,000 steps. 90,000 steps.... All the way to 100,000 steps!

The Vast Expanse Shrine rumbled as the First Heaven was summoned. Then the Second Heaven. And the Third Heaven.... It was like the same scene that had played out ten years ago, something so incredible it was difficult to put into words. Everyone was thoroughly shocked as, in the time it takes a single incense stick to burn... all ten Heavens were summoned!

Bells tolled in all the sects. The world was shaken. Meng Hao stood with Yan'er atop the Tenth Heaven, and the mountain breeze stirred their hair as they looked out at the clouds. As for the Baptism of the tolling bells, the benefit to Yan'er was beyond description.

However, she didn't care about any such good fortune. Her face was flushed as she stood next to her Master, looking out at Heaven and Earth. The feeling left her intoxicated.

"Yan'er," he said softly, "look at the clouds, the mountains, the sky, and the land. Remember this image. However grand your vision is, that is how grand your future can be. It is also how grand... your heart can be.

"We cultivators cultivate, not the body, but the heart!"

Chapter 1480: Challenging all the Sects!

As Meng Hao and Yan'er stood atop the Tenth Heaven, they were one with the wind. Meng Hao's softly spoken words entered Yan'er's ears and melted down into her heart, where they would remain forever.

It was very likely that no matter how many years passed, Yan'er would think back to this moment, remember standing next to her Master, and think about the words he had spoken to her.

Cultivators cultivate, not the body, but the heart.

As she looked out, she saw the sky stretching out over the lands. She saw how Heaven and Earth were connected, and she saw the endlessness stars. All of that came to be imprinted onto her heart.

Other than the words spoken by Meng Hao there above the Tenth Heaven, the only sound was that of the gently murmuring wind. It was as if the whole world had slowed down, and the two of them were the only ones in existence, Master and apprentice....

It was a moment that seemed to last for ages....

Eventually, the exultant cries of the disciples of the Ninth Sect rose up from below. The world was trembling, and the disciples of the Eighth Sect... looked as ashen as if they were dead.

As for the Chosen who had come from the other sects, they could hear their own hearts pounding in their chests.

"He... he said that he's going to visit all of the Vast Expanse Shrines in all of the sects?" They exchanged glances, their faces as pale as death.

"Dammit, who said Fang Mu was injured? He... he's not injured at all! He's basically taking his disciple sightseeing!"

The Eighth Sect could do nothing more than stew in their bitterness. The cheering of the Ninth Sect grew more intense, until finally, everyone began chanting, "Eldest Brother! Eldest Brother!"

Then, the spell formation appeared again, and the power of teleportation

shook everything. Meng Hao's face fairly glowed as he chuckled and said, "Alright, let's go to the Seventh Sect!"

Yan'er took a deep breath and nodded meekly. Meng Hao swished his sleeve, and the two of them led countless cultivators toward the enormous teleportation portal.

The disciples of the Ninth Sect rose up into the sky, clamoring in excitement. The hosts from the Eighth Sect remained in place, bitterness and other mixed emotions on their faces as they watched the Ninth Sect vanish.

Despite the fact that the Ninth Sect was now gone, they had left behind a legend. A myth! The disciples of the Eighth Sect were stifled. Their Chosen were left gasping for breath. On their own Vast Expanse Shrine, the name 'Fang Mu' could be seen as clear as day. They could well imagine that, in future days to come, people would try to take back 1st place, but would fail.

That name would remain there in the Eighth Sect for all eternity....

That was the gift Meng Hao was giving to Yan'er, and also his response to the ten years of challenges issued by the other sects.... If you come challenge the Ninth Sect's Vast Expanse Shrine, well then... I will go to your sect and take 1st place on yours!

I will strike back with extreme prejudice, cleanly and efficiently!

Rumbling could be heard above the seventh continent, within the Seventh Sect. The teleportation portal appeared, and countless disciples from the Ninth Sect descended. Meng Hao's voice once again rang out.

"I am Fang Mu from the Ninth Sect, here to challenge your Vast Expanse Shrine!" His voice joined the ringing of the bells, which still hadn't faded away. Then, he led the exuberant Yan'er onto the Seventh Sect's Vast Expanse Shrine.

The disciples and Chosen of the Seventh Sect were shaken as more bells began to ring. From the 1st step to the 100,000th, from the First Heaven to the Tenth, everything happened just as before. Heaven shook and the Earth quaked. The disciples of the Seventh Sect looked on with pale faces.

At the same time, Yan'er gained indescribable good fortune. She was thoroughly Baptised, and her cultivation base even increased dramatically.

Once again, she was able to look out upon Heaven and Earth, and as she did, cracking sounds emanated out from within her, which came from her explosive cultivation base growth. Because of the Baptism and the other good fortune, she was advancing by leaps and bounds.

What was happening this day was certain to be indelibly recorded within the annals of the Vast Expanse School. It even surpassed the miracle of Meng Hao summoning the Tenth Heaven in the Ninth Sect.

On this day, Meng Hao accomplished something the likes of which had never occurred within the history of the Vast Expanse School. He... reached the pinnacle of every single Vast Expanse Shrine in all of the sects. He took first place, and summoned the Tenth Heaven!

And he didn't do it alone either; he took his apprentice with him.

On that day, countless individuals came to learn of Yan'er, and innumerable disciples came to envy her with utmost jealousy.

And yet, all they could do was that, envy her. Meng Hao took her from the Seventh Sect to the Sixth. After summoning the Tenth Heaven there, he went to the Fifth Sect. The Fourth Sect. The Third Sect. The Second Sect....

He didn't tarry or delay. He summoned the Tenth Heaven in one shrine after another. Because of the good fortune she received, Yan'er's cultivation base became more boundless, more profound, and in fact even exceeded that of a Chosen.

In the Vast Expanse Shrine of the First Sect, the Tenth Heaven appeared once again. Heaven and Earth trembled, and the world shook. Countless disciples felt as if thunder were crashing in their minds. They could do little more than pant at the unforgettable, history-making events which were unfolding.

"Nine sects... and all of the Tenth Heavens...."

"Fang Mu. Fang Mu! He fully deserves to be... the number one Chosen of

the Vast Expanse School!!”

“It’s too bad his cultivation base isn’t in the Dao Realm. If it were, I’d love to see how far he could get on the Transcendence Path. After all, the Vast Expanse Shrine is for those below the Dao Realm. Only the Dao Realm... can walk the Transcendence Path!”

“The benefits his apprentice Yan’er received from the Baptism of the tolling bells is impossible to even imagine!”

The entire Vast Expanse School was shaken and in an uproar. The disciples of the Ninth Sect couldn’t stop cheering. From the moment they flew to the Eight Sect... all the way to the First Sect, they continued to shout out at the tops of their lungs.

“Eldest Brother Fang Mu!” The sound echoed out without stop.

On this day, Meng Hao caused an unimaginable stir. Not only were countless ordinary disciples in the Vast Expanse School shocked, even the Dao Realm experts, the Dao Lords, and the Dao Sovereigns were all amazed by the miracle which he had pulled off.

When the Tenth Heaven appeared in the First Sect, Paragons from all of the nine sects came. They were all in the 7-Essences level, and yet they were all equally shaken. Although Meng Hao was vastly below them, they had to admit that, in terms of latent talent and future potential, this Fang Mu... had long since surpassed them. If things went smoothly for him, then he would one day stand among them as peers, or even exceed them.

“A future Paragon!” murmured the 7-Essences Paragon from the First Sect. His words instantly gained the approval of all of the other 7-Essences Paragons from the other sects.

Even Streamcloud from the Third Sect had to concede this point.

He truly was a future Paragon!

*

Note from Deathblade: This is a short chapter, barely hitting 1,400 words instead of the usually 2,000 or so.

Chapter 1481: The Peak of the World

And that he was. His true self was already the most powerful of Paragons. As for his clone, Meng Hao was sure that if he desired to walk the Path of the Paragon, he would definitely reach the 9-Essences level.

It might take some time, but he would succeed in the end.

However, that was not what he chose to do. Having a 9-Essences Paragon clone wouldn't help him to Transcend, and therefore, his original plan had never changed.

He would Transcend with his true self, and then, with everything he had gained in recent years, with the Ninth Sect and all its power, with the ghosts of the necropolis... he would unleash deadly violence upon the Immortal God Continent and the Devil Realm Continent. And most especially... the 33 Heavens!

He would return to his home, to the Mountain and Sea Butterfly, to his family and friends. He would return to the Mountains and Seas... to get revenge!!

That was his focus, his obsession, something which could never be erased from his mind. He would reforge the Mountain and Sea Realm, he would resurrect the meat jelly, and he would call back the copper mirror. Even if that was a defiance of the Vast Expanse, he would do it.

Meng Hao stood there atop the Tenth Heaven in the First Sect. Smiling, he breathed in deeply.

Down below, the countless disciples of the First Sect looked up with mixed emotions. Their faces were devoid of blood as they stared bitterly at Meng Hao.

The Chosen of the First Sect looked on blankly. They were truly eagles, but as of this moment, they had no other choice but to admit that the generation into which they had been born contained a towering mountain.

That mountain... was something that stretched so high above them they would never be able to fly over it.

Silence prevailed. Also in the First Sect was a woman, the current Holy Daughter of the generation. She was Han Bei, and as she looked up at Meng Hao and Yan'er atop the Tenth Heaven, she felt profoundly uneasy.

Although Meng Hao hadn't caused any trouble for her throughout the years, she still feared him. The more he cared about Chu Yuyan, the safer she felt, and yet the more she felt safe, the more that sense of safety scared her.

It was a paradox that only seemed to increase in intensity, and was influencing her mission here in the Vast Expanse School.

On more than one occasion, she had considered investigating why Meng Hao had created this clone. However, she didn't dare to even get close to him, and could only manipulate things from afar. Even then, she didn't dare to push things too far, and thus was left only with speculations.

Over the years, she had come up with numerous theories, but could not confirm any of them. Sometimes, she even felt as though all of her theories were completely incorrect.

After a moment of looking at Meng Hao and Yan'er, she sighed and looked away.

The wind blew atop the Tenth Heaven. As people looked on, Yan'er's gaze fell upon her master, and her eyes shone radiantly. It was as if this Master of hers had become the most important person in her entire life.

"Master!" she said loudly.

"Yes?" Meng Hao said, smiling.

"Master!!"

"Uh, yes?" Meng Hao gaped, looking over at her.

"Master!!" she cried again.

Pretending to look very serious, Meng Hao reached out and bopped her head. She rubbed her head, looking very resentful. However, he merely smiled at her, well aware that she was completely ecstatic at the moment.

Then he looked back out at Heaven and Earth, and his eyes gleamed

with anticipation.

“The Vast Expanse Shrine offers no further good fortune for me. If I want to extinguish my last ten Soul Lamps, then... the only option I have is to walk the Transcendence Path!”

In the Vast Expanse School, the two most famous trials by fire were the Vast Expanse Shrines and the Transcendence Path. Only cultivators in the Dao Realm would tread the Transcendence Path. Of course, just walking that path didn't guarantee Transcendence. However, there was still that hope.

That path was the traditional and proper way to try to Transcend, but to date, not even the Sect Leader or others of his level had been able to reach its end.

It was a very difficult path to travel, and it seemed endless. However, the Dao Realm experts of the Vast Expanse School were entranced with it, mostly because of the multitudinous good fortune therein, good fortune that could cause one's cultivation base to advance by leaps and bounds.

Meng Hao took a deep breath. He had a strong premonition that... his clone would be able to complete the first sealing mark of the Ninth Hex on the Transcendence Path.

He had further speculations regarding how to complete the full Ninth Hex, and was sure that those speculations would also be verified on the Transcendence Path.

However, now was not the time. He had the feeling... that once he headed down that path, it would be a very, very long time before he came back. In fact, it was even possible that he never would.

Besides, there were still a few matters to handle within the Vast Expanse School.

He looked over at Yan'er, and could see that because of the good fortune of the Vast Expanse Shrine, her cultivation base was thoroughly stabilized, and had even made significant progress. She was now in the mid Immortal Realm. Although she had just made that breakthrough thanks to the

Baptism of the tolling bells, Meng Hao could see that in the coming years, her cultivation base would continue to advance rapidly.

Her latent talent had been completely optimized by the Baptism, and her qi passageways, as well as any cultivation bottlenecks, had been cleared.

In the Vast Expanse School, good fortune like that was something only Yan'er could acquire.

You could even say that on her path of cultivation, she had already opened the way to a great Dao.

"Come on," Meng Hao said with a smile, "Let's go back to the Ninth Sect." They, along with the cheering disciples of the Ninth Sect, stepped back into the teleportation portal. As the First Sect disciples looked on with bitter expressions, they vanished.

The rumbling of the spell formation shook all sects from the First to the Eighth as they returned to the Ninth Sect. The cheering shouts of the Ninth Sect's disciples shook the Vast Expanse School. A legend had been established which no one would ever be able to top.

When the group appeared back in the Ninth Sect, those who had remained behind also started cheering loudly.

"They're back! Everyone's back!"

"Eldest Brother Fang Mu has returned!!"

"Eldest Brother, Eldest Brother...."

The Ninth Sect seethed with excitement. The disciples who had been too slow to join the others in stepping through the teleportation portal earlier now began to crowd around and cheer for their Eldest Brother.

On that day, a grand celebration began in the Ninth Sect.

The news of what had happened filled the other sects. For a long time to come, the disciples of the Ninth Sect would be filled with unmatched joy.

As for the disciples from the other sects who had set up camp in the Ninth Sect, they made a swift departure. None of them dared to remain behind. As for the ten years of provocation and challenges, they were now

officially a thing of the past.

Only a few people were aware that what Meng Hao had done was because of a few words uttered by Yan'er. Most of the disciples thought that he had done it as a way to tell the Chosen of the other sects that if they wanted to challenge him, they could remain in their own sects to do so. There was no need for them to come to the Ninth Sect.

In order to make things easier for them, he simply put his name on their Vast Expanse Shrines....

Because of Meng Hao, the spirits of the entire Ninth Sect were instantly lifted.

Their leader was the overbearing, domineering Ninth Paragon, who was also their protector. Among their number was the ultimate Chosen, the disciple who had completely dominated the Vast Expanse School, Fang Mu!

Because of all of that, the Ninth Sect was completely different from the other sects.

The celebrations lasted for more than a month. Eventually things settled down, but deep down, the disciples of the Ninth Sect were still extremely excited. The glory and honor they felt, as well as the sense of belonging, would never be erased.

During that month, Meng Hao had no choice other than to receive the various visitors who came to offer their respects. However, after the month passed, the number of visitors didn't decrease. In fact, they increased. Finally, he was forced to close the mountain.

From then on, he never left the mountain, and politely refused to see all visitors. However, instead of going into secluded meditation, he spent time teaching cultivation techniques to Yan'er.

Time passed. Before long, three years had gone by.

During that time, Meng Hao paid little heed to his own cultivation base. He helped Yan'er to refine her Immortal meridians, benefiting her with all of his experience regarding cultivation. He helped her gain more Dao

enlightenment, holding nothing back. He spared no effort in passing on to her everything he knew.

Because of such conscientious teaching on his part, Yan'er's cultivation base rose with shocking speed, and was far more stable than anyone else in her generation.

During those years, a certain feeling slowly rose up within Yan'er. Eventually, she began to laugh less, and when she looked at Meng Hao, it was with concern, as if she couldn't bear the thought of parting with him.

After all her years of being dependent on him, she had come to be very sensitive to his personality. Based on everything that had happened during the past three years, she came to feel strongly that....

"Master is going to leave...." That scared her. No matter how many times she asked about it, Meng Hao would always just smile and decline to comment. However, whenever his gaze fell upon her, it was warmer than before, and it almost seemed like he was recalling past times.

Another ten years passed....

Yan'er's cultivation base continued to climb higher and higher. However, her heart only continued to grow more anxious. One day she saw a jade slip belonging to her Master that apparently contained information about the sect's Transcendence Path. At that point, her heart began to pound.

She knew that the Transcendence Path was something only Dao Realm cultivators were qualified to tread. Supposedly, it contained incredible good fortune, and yet few people actually dared to walk upon it.

After all, it also contained profound danger. It was not the Vast Expanse Shrine, which was located in the sect itself. It was in the outside world, located within a rift in the starry sky of the Vast Expanse.

After entering, one would be completely cut off, and would not return for dozens or even hundreds of years. It was a path that a cultivator could only step onto twice in a lifetime.

Years ago, Yan'er would have pressed her Master about the matter, and wouldn't have given up until she figured out a way to prevent him from

going to such a dangerous place. But she had grown up, and understood that it was a decision for him to make. She knew that within her Master's heart was an obsession that even she couldn't comprehend.

And so she said nothing.

During the thirteen years which passed, Meng Hao extinguished a few more Soul Lamps. Now, he had only seven which continued to burn.

Another year passed, and Yan'er was now at the peak of the Immortal Realm. The speed of her progress was far beyond normal, causing widespread shock among the disciples of the Ninth Sect. But when they considered who her Master was, they realized that it wasn't such an unreasonable thing.

After all, the good fortune of eight Vast Expanse Shrines was beyond incredible.

Chapter 1482: Looking Back at This Life!

That year, Yan'er faced her Ancient Tribulation.

That day was one of utmost importance to Meng Hao as well. He personally set up the relevant spell formations, and arranged for the energy of Heaven and Earth in the Ninth Sect to act as Dharma Protector. Several days later, when the Ancient Tribulation finally concluded, he breathed a sigh of relief.

He watched Yan'er pass her Ancient Tribulation, watched her ignite her Soul Lamps, and then watched her close her eyes in meditation to begin breathing exercises. The whole time, his gaze was soft and kind. To mortals, she wouldn't be considered young, but to cultivators in the Ancient Realm, she was like a girl. The passage of time left no scars upon her. She only continued to grow more beautiful, and at the same time, mature. To other members of the sect, she was truly a Chosen, someone who knew how to conduct herself properly and with decorum, someone everyone enjoyed being around.

It was only around Meng Hao that she would pout and act like a coquettish little girl.

Meng Hao could tell that Chu Yuyan's aura was growing stronger and stronger on her. Sometimes, he couldn't even tell the difference between the two.

That was especially true as he watched her doing breathing exercises after passing her Ancient Tribulation. Many memories flitted through his mind.

In her last life, Chu Yuyan had never passed through the Immortal Realm. But in this life, with Meng Hao's help, she was reaching the highest pinnacles.

Furthermore, regardless of whether her name was Chu Yuyan or Yan'er, she had earned a place in his heart for all eternity.

"It's about time for me to let go, too...." he murmured.

A few days later, Yan'er opened her eyes and glanced over at Meng Hao. From the look in his eyes, she seemed to understand what was about to happen. She loathed the idea of parting with him, but it had been years since she came to understand the choice he would eventually make. Today, there was something deep within his eyes that explained everything.

"Master...." she said, her voice quavering.

"You're in the Ancient Realm now," he said softly. "You understand how to go about extinguishing your Soul Lamps, right?"

"If there are any areas you don't understand, now is the time to ask me.

"Before the Ancient Realm, cultivators can receive assistance from others. In fact, such assistance can make things much easier. However, starting with the Ancient Realm, you'll have to rely completely upon yourself.

"Never forget what I told you before. We cultivators cultivate, not the body, but the heart."

Tears welled up in Yan'er's eyes, and then began to stream down her cheeks. She was trembling. "Master...."

"I've prepared nine jade slips for you. Each one of them contains some of the power of my divine sense.... If you encounter a dangerous situation, you can be protected." By this point, Meng Hao's clone was extremely close to the Dao Realm, and he could even draw upon some of the power of his true self.

As such, the nine jade slips held some of his true self's divine sense power, and would be able to keep Yan'er safe wherever she went on Planet Vast Expanse.

"I've also prepared seven volumes of Dao treatises, which contain all of the magical techniques and divine abilities I've learned in my life.

"There are also 100,000 medicinal pills which I concocted especially for you. That should ensure your path of cultivation is a smooth one.

“As for magical items, I never did build up a huge collection, but what I did gain, I’m leaving to you.

“There are also Immortal jades and spirit stones. In the past, I used to be extremely attracted to them, but now that I think back, it just makes me sigh. I’m leaving everything to you.”

“Master, I don’t want any of that, I just want....” She trailed off, tears flowing down her face. She was afraid, terrified even. Although it had been ten years since she realized what her Master planned to do, she still wasn’t ready for it to actually happen.

“Because of the fame I have built up,” Meng Hao continued, “no one will dare to bully you while you’re in the Ninth Sect. Everyone here will take care of you. I’ve also paid a visit to the Paragon to ask him to watch out for you.

“I might not be here, but I’ve made various other preparations to keep you safe, for example the mastiff, who will continue to accompany you.”

Anxiety erupted within Yan’er. “No, I don’t want that. I don’t care, Master, I–”

“Yan’er!” he growled.

A tremor ran through her. In her entire life, she couldn’t remember a single time when her Master had been strict with her. This was the first time. Even more tears flowed down her face.

“You’ve grown up,” he said softly. Then he reached out and bopped her head.

She subconsciously bowed her head, weeping.

He shook his head. “Come on,” he said. “I want to take you somewhere.” As he turned to leave, she rose to her feet, wiped the tears off her cheeks, and followed. For the first time in thirteen years, Master and apprentice left the Ninth Sect.

They traveled to the border region of the ninth continent, where they found a river, next to which was a village. They arrived around evening,

when smoke was rising lazily from the chimneys of the houses. Meng Hao caught sight of the house where he had lived as a child in this life. It had long since changed ownership; the scholar who had found him in the river had passed away many years ago.

However, the old man who had cared for him was still alive. He had ended up marrying the village widow, and both of them were now completely ancient, with numerous children and grandchildren.

When Meng Hao saw the old man, he thought back to many warm memories from this life, and a slight smile touched his face.

Yan'er stood quietly at his side. She said nothing, but she could sense the tender feelings in her Master's heart.

They left around dawn. Meng Hao didn't actually meet with the old man in person. However, he left behind numerous age-prolonging, longevity-enhancing medicinal pills, as well as jade slips which would protect the man and his bloodline for generations to come.

It wasn't long after Meng Hao left that the old man yawned and walked out of his room. When he looked down, he saw all the items that Meng Hao had left, and his jaw dropped. After some contemplation, he shivered and looked up into the Heavens. Finally, he smiled.

"Haowie, you came back...?" He chuckled as he recalled the young boy from so many years ago.

A few days later, Meng Hao stood at the very top of the Vast Expanse Shrine, where he clasped hands to the Heavens.

"I am Fang Mu, from the Ninth Sect of the Vast Expanse School. I desire to walk the Transcendence Path. Paragon, please open the portal!"

As his voice echoed out, the Paragon first gaped in confusion, then began to reel in shock. A buzz filled the Ninth Sect as countless disciples flew toward the mountain peak upon which rose the Vast Expanse Shrine. There, they saw Meng Hao standing at the peak, and Yan'er standing at the bottom of the mountain, looking up at him.

"He's... going to walk the Transcendence Path...."

“Indeed. The Transcendence Path is exactly the type of place for a Chosen like him!” The other Chosen in the Ninth Sect sighed, mixed emotions playing out on their faces.

People had long since speculated that he might do something just like this. The truth was that Ancient Realm cultivators weren’t prohibited from walking the Transcendence Path. However, it was usually done only by unique Chosen with special qualifications.

As for Meng Hao, if he didn’t qualify to be Chosen, then no one in the Vast Expanse School did.

Naturally, he was qualified to walk the Transcendence Path.

Yan’er stood there silently, looking up at her Master atop the mountain. Her eyes gleamed with determination, and she took a deep breath, telling herself that she had to be strong. Yet, she couldn’t stop the tears from rolling down her cheeks.

Meng Hao’s voice was still echoing out when the voice of the 7-Essences Paragon responded from within the Ninth Sect.

“Are you sure?”

“Absolutely!” Meng Hao replied, his voice filled with a decisiveness that could sever nails and chop iron.

Moments later, an intense rumbling sound filled Heaven and Earth, as if someone were working a type of grand magic. It sounded like the sky itself were being ripped open. Everything shook as an enormous rift appeared up above.

The rift shone with a seven-colored glow, dazzling and radiant. The light then transformed into a staircase, which descended from above and came to a stop directly in front of Meng Hao. He looked up at the staircase, and could see that within the rift in the sky was another world.

It was at this point that an ancient voice echoed out: “The sect rules of the Vast Expanse School state that any disciple who enters the Transcendence Path must leave behind a Soul Lamp. If the lamp shines, the cultivator lives. If the lamp is extinguished... the cultivator has died.”

The countless disciples in the area looked on silently.

Meng Hao waved his sleeve, causing a stream of soul fire to fly out from his forehead. The soul fire swirled through the air, transforming into the shape of a Soul Lamp.

This particular Soul Lamp was different from his collection of Ancient Realm Soul Lamps. It was formed from his own soul fire, and would indicate to the outside world whether or not he was still alive. Based on the state of that flame, people outside would know the state he was in as he walked the Transcendence Path.

What people did to the flame on the outside, however, wouldn't affect Meng Hao. He waved his hand, sending the soul fire lamp over to Yan'er.

"Place that in my secluded meditation facilities," he said, smiling. With that, he took a deep breath, stepping forward onto the staircase and speeding upward toward the rift.

As he rose higher into the sky, the Ninth Sect's 7-Essences Paragon spoke into his ear. "Fang Mu, there are many things in life which can't be forced. If you reach a point where you can't go onward, you must turn back...."

Just when Meng Hao was about to step into the rift and enter that most ancient Transcendence Path, Yan'er suddenly called out in a loud voice.

"Master, do you... do you remember back when you told me the story of Chu Yuyan? You promised that if I wanted to hear the rest of the story, that you would tell it to me."

Meng Hao stopped and looked back down at the mountains below, and at Yan'er, standing there in the crowd. "I remember," he said, smiling softly. "Do you want to hear it now?"

She trembled, tears pouring down her face. "No, not now," she replied. "Master, can you tell me the rest of the story when you get back...?"

The idea of parting with her Master hurt so much that it felt like her heart was being crushed.

“Of course,” he replied, nodding. With that he turned, took a deep breath... and stepped into the rift, onto... the Transcendence Path.

Chapter 1483: On the Transcendence Path!

From the moment of the creation of the Vast Expanse School until now, the Transcendence Path had always been of vital importance. It could even be considered a trial by fire that gave birth to the reserve power of the entire sect.

In truth, it wasn't really a trial by fire, not the type that disciples in sects usually participated in. Despite being part of the Vast Expanse School, the things that happened on the Transcendence Path were beyond the control of even Paragons.

Everything depended on the individual involved. Everything depended on chance and luck.

From ancient times until now, countless disciples of the Vast Expanse School had walked the path, and yet none had reached the end. Everyone who returned had done so from somewhere partway along the path.

Those who didn't return died along the way.

Actually, the Transcendence Path wasn't really a literal path.

It was a very unique location, so much so that even people who had been there and experienced what lay inside had difficulty explaining it to others. It was almost as if there were some magical law at play which prevented people from explaining everything that had happened inside.

The first thing Meng Hao saw after entering the rift, after stepping onto the Transcendence Path, was a lamp.

It was... a bronze lamp.

It actually looked almost completely identical to the bronze lamp inside of his true self.

Except, this bronze lamp was enormous, so large that it was impossible to describe, larger even than Planet Vast Expanse. The starry sky in this location was the type that made one's mind reel to even look at it.

The Transcendence Path... was this bronze lamp.

The burning flame of the lamp was made up of three parts, the outer flame, the inner flame, and the heart of the flame.... Apparently, they formed three different dimensions within the world, and the light they cast illuminated everything therein.

The world was vastly enormous, as was the bronze lamp. In addition to the dimension in the flame, the body of the bronze lamp itself also contained its own dimension.

Meng Hao's first thought upon looking at the shocking lamp was that it was actually the same lamp which existed within his true self.

Then he couldn't help but think of the Devil Realm's World-Butterflies, or the precious treasure that was the Mountain and Sea Realm, which became the Nine Mountains and Nine Seas.

All of those things could contain worlds of living things. This bronze lamp that he was looking at... was that same type of precious treasure.

"So, the Transcendence Path... is actually broken up into two parts. One part is in the body of the lamp, the other, in the flame.

"As for the flame... it is further broken up into three parts. The outer flame, the inner flame, and the heart of the flame...." Meng Hao's eyes glittered with determination. With that, he transformed into a flash of light that shot toward the bronze lamp.

The bronze lamp got bigger and bigger as he approached. Time passed. Not even Meng Hao could have predicted that after flying for seven months, going all out with every scrap of power he could muster, he still wouldn't have reached the lamp itself.

By this point, he couldn't even see the lamp's flame any more, only a world of bronze.

His expression was very serious as he continued to fly onward. Three months later, the lamp started to look different. He could see lands covered with buildings. He saw countless mountain ranges, and even rivers and seas.

Eventually, his vision swam until he couldn't see. Then, when things

were clear again... he was within the world of the bronze lamp.

Rumbling sounds echoed out, and an indescribable force pushed down onto him. It felt like countless mountains were trying to crush him, as if an enormous hand were pushing down onto his head. The pressure shoved him down out of the air, sending him speeding toward the ground.

A moment later, he slammed into the earth.

A boom echoed out, and afterward, he lay prone on the ground, blue veins bulging out on his neck and face. He let out a roar, and his body shook violently. After enough time passed for three incense sticks to burn, he was finally able to struggle into a crouching position.

That effort alone left his garments soaked with sweat. He was trembling physically, and his bones felt like they were on the verge of breaking. His eyes were thoroughly bloodshot.

The intensity of the pressure exceeded anything Meng Hao could have imagined, and was the most terrifying weight he had ever borne. Beneath this pressure, every rotation of his cultivation base made it seem like his qi passageways would burst.

Despite all of that, his eyes gleamed with focus, and even a tinge of madness. Gritting his teeth, he ever so slowly rose to his feet. It took two incense sticks' worth of time, but in the end, he was standing there, roaring at the top of his lungs.

In that very same instant, one of his remaining seven Soul Lamps was extinguished.

The extinguishing of that Soul Lamp unleashed new life force which flooded into him, strengthening him and allowing him to stand tall and straight.

His eyes grew redder, but excitement filled his heart.

"So, this is the Transcendence Path huh.... I never would have guessed that one of the Soul Lamps I found so difficult to extinguish could be put out as soon as I entered." He looked around and found himself surrounded by a desolate wasteland. Other than him, no living being could be seen.

However, he knew that he couldn't possibly be the only person in here. There were other cultivators from the Vast Expanse School who had entered the place in the past, and were still inside after countless years.

Taking a deep breath, he took a step forward and began to walk. He felt like a mortal, plodding along. The path to be tread was a long one, that was something he had come to understand even more clearly as he drew closer to the bronze lamp.

Considering his current state, walking the entire length of the bronze lamp, and then reaching the second portion of the Transcendence Path, seemed almost impossible.

And yet, he didn't give up. Panting, jaw clenched, he walked alone through the wasteland....

That year, some important events occurred within the Vast Expanse School.

Fang Mu, who had established an unheard-of legend within the Vast Expanse School, who had summoned the Tenth Heaven of all of the Vast Expanse Shrines of the nine sects, stepped onto the Transcendence Path with an Ancient Realm cultivation base.

His departure caused the Chosen of the other sects in the Vast Expanse School to breathe sighs of relief. Living in the same era as Fang Mu made them feel as pressured, as if Heaven were weighing down on them.

Now they could relax, at least temporarily. No one could say for sure whether Fang Mu would rise to new heights on the Transcendence Path, or whether he would fade away and never be heard of again. Time would tell.

Another thing that happened that year was that the Sect Leader and the rest of the group who had entered the necropolis finally returned. They had remained within the necropolis for dozens of years, and yet, were not able to reach the ninth land mass. They reached the seventh, but were unable to open the path to the eighth.

When they returned, some of the original party members were not with

them. Those who did return were all in bad shape, and Bai Wuchen hovered on the brink of death.

However, all of the group who had returned alive had made significant progress with their cultivation bases. The faint aura of Transcendence was upon them, which caused a huge stir in the Vast Expanse School.

Also during that year, Patriarch Chi Feng made a cultivation base breakthrough, acquiring his ninth Essence and becoming the Eighth Paragon.

Outside of the Vast Expanse School, somewhere out in the boundless starry sky, Meng Hao's true self was in the location of the fourth copper mirror shard, flying along at top speed. His face was pale, and blood oozed out of the corners of his mouth. A vast swarm of termites was chasing after him, voraciously devouring everything in their path.

At the moment, he had black armor that covered his arm and chest, giving him incredible battle prowess. By now, killing peak 9-Essences cultivators would be no difficult task for him. And yet, these termites had him bedraggled and fleeing.

The main reason was because there were so many of them they were impossible to even count. Furthermore... each and every one of them emanated brutal auras, the weakest of which was in the Immortal Realm, and the strongest... 9-Essences!

Their numbers were beyond description....

Thankfully, he had prepared well before coming into this area. After speeding along for a short time, he reached a point where he had set up a spell formation earlier. The light of teleportation flickered, and then he vanished. A moment later, the swarm of termites engulfed the teleportation portal.

Apparently, even the flickering teleportation portal was something that the termites considered to be food. Crunching sounds emanated out, and in the blink of an eye, the spell formation had been completely consumed.

However, being unable to consume Meng Hao's true self, the termites

howled in rage. Anyone who could hear the sound of it would be truly shaken.

After a while, though, they begrudgingly gave up and returned to their home, a land riddled with countless passageways burrowed here and there.

In another location in the starry sky of the Vast Expanse, dazzling light flickered, and Meng Hao's true self staggered out. He coughed up a mouthful of blood, then closed his eyes and rotated his cultivation base. Rumbling booms like thunder could be heard inside of him as numerous pustules appeared on his skin. They began to wriggle, and then tiny termites burst out from within. Each and every one screamed and then exploded.

After expelling and destroying several hundred termites, Meng Hao's body was soaked with blood. However, when he opened his eyes, they shone brightly, and his body quickly recovered.

"I wonder how many countless ages that swarm of termites has existed. How unimaginable...." With that, he looked down at the armor which covered him, as it faded away and transformed into four mirror shards.

He had found the fourth mirror shard in the termites' nest, and had extracted it from within the body of the termite queen herself.

"With four shards, I have half.... Now, to get the fifth shard.

"My clone is on the Transcendence Path.... Who would have imagined that path to be so difficult...? If my speculations are correct, completing the Ninth Hex is not something that can be done in a single life.

"I have to collect the rest of these mirror shards. Getting just these two took me a few dozen years, but I suspect that acquiring the final four... will take hundreds." He looked around in exhaustion for a moment before sitting down cross-legged to do breathing exercises. After a while, he rose and sped off in the direction of the fifth shard.

Chapter 1484: Extinguishing Soul Lamps on the Path!

Three years passed.

People in the Vast Expanse School still talked about Fang Mu. As for the mountain he had lived on, only Yan'er occupied it now. It was not open to visitors, and her life was once again peaceful and quiet.

Without Meng Hao there, there was no more playful pouting on her part. Sometimes, she just sat there in a daze, daydreaming about the past.

But there was no avoiding the truth.... Her Master was gone.

Other than practicing cultivation, there was only one thing that she absolutely had to do every day, and that was to visit her Master's secluded meditation facilities, where she had enshrined his soul fire.

As long as that soul fire burned, her Master was alive.

One day, she came to visit as she always did. She kowtowed to the soul fire, and then began to speak in a murmuring voice.

"Master, you've been gone for three years. That's not too long...."

"Oh, last night when I was practicing cultivation, I finally understood that one magical technique.

"Another thing you don't know about, Master. I heard that yesterday, those jerks from the other sects started making trouble again. Supposedly, they're going to start challenging the Vast Expanse Shrine once more.

"Master, there's another thing...." Every time Yan'er came, she would speak to herself in his fashion, as if her Master were standing there in front of her. This time, even as she spoke, a tremor suddenly ran through her, and her voice faltered. Her expression flickered, and the blood drained from her face as she stared in shock at the soul fire.

For three years, the soul fire hadn't changed at all. But just now, it had faded a bit, as though it might wink out at any moment. The sight caused Yan'er to shake, and her mind to spin. She knew that this was the flame of

her Master's life force, and that if it went out, it meant that he was dead.

Obviously, he must be experiencing some deadly situation on the Transcendence Path.

Her heart filled with bitterness and anxiety, and yet there was nothing she could do to help her Master. She could do nothing to change anything, really.

"Master, I'm so useless...." Tears began to roll down her cheeks as she trembled, still staring at the soul fire.

The truth was that Meng Hao really was facing a deadly test on the Transcendence Path. The pressure he was facing had just increased dramatically.

He had continued to walk for three years, and gradually, had become used to the pressure. He had even reached the point where he could jog for a bit. But today, he crossed into a new region in which the pressure suddenly increased by, not double, but tenfold!

It happened suddenly and without any warning whatsoever. Meng Hao had literally no time to even react before being slammed down onto the ground.

Many of his bones were fractured as he struggled against the pressure, and his flesh was smashed. Cracking sounds could be heard as his skeleton hovered on the brink of being shattered.

A sensation of imminent life-or-death crisis swept through him. On top of it all, his cultivation base was suppressed. He began to tremble, and his eyes were completely shot with blood as he let out a howl. However, at the moment, there was nothing he could do.

Any other person would have been destroyed instantly, but Meng Hao's true self had created this clone following the pattern laid out by the bronze lamp, making it perfect in every aspect.

It was pure, lacking any impurities or defilements, and possessed the ultimate Immortal aura. In fact, it was even possible to say that this clone was an Immortal body unto itself.

When you added in the terrifying divine will of Meng Hao's true self, it meant that the clone was just barely able to survive under this sudden tenfold increase in pressure.

Time passed. After fifteen or sixteen hours, Meng Hao's vision was fading. However, beneath the intense, deadly pressure, he was able to extinguish one of his six remaining lit Soul Lamps.

Instantly, life force poured into him, healing his bones and mending his flesh. His cultivation base flourished, and his fading life force once again began to thrive.

Having endured through the deadly crisis, Meng Hao struggled into a sitting position. His face was pale, and he was panting as he looked behind him at the path he had walked. As of this moment, he fully understood how the Transcendence Path worked. The pressure was not something that remained constant, instead, it would increase explosively.

Obviously, the farther one traveled along the path, the more terrifying the pressure got. Furthermore, there was no warning; it would happen in an instant. Life and death were separated by a single step.

As Meng Hao's life force was restored, Yan'er was there in his secluded meditation facilities in the Ninth Sect of the Vast Expanse School, staring at his soul fire. When the flame began to burn brightly once again, she wiped her tears away, and made a decision.

"Master, I'm going to get strong as quickly as possible. Then... I'll walk the Transcendence Path with you." Having made her decision, she took a deep breath and left the secluded meditation facilities.

From that day on, she didn't remain holed up on the mountain. She left, and began to challenge the Vast Expanse Shrine. Although the tolling bells offered no benefit to her, the other good fortune within the Vast Expanse Shrine was still helpful.

That was her choice: first challenge the Vast Expanse Shrine, then walk the Transcendence Path.

Another three years passed. Meng Hao had now been on the

Transcendence Path for six years. So far, he still hadn't caught sight of anyone else. It was as if he were the only living being in all Heaven and Earth. As he proceeded onward under the incredible pressure, he gradually got used to it. Eventually, he reached the point where he could jog, just like he had before. However, he had the feeling that... an explosive increase in pressure was coming.

As the feeling grew stronger, he pressed onward with increased caution. A few months later, he finally saw someone up ahead. It was a person wearing similar clothes to himself, who proceeded forward with great difficulty, his hair completely disheveled. However, he emanated the aura of the Dao Realm.

This was the first fellow disciple he had seen so far on the Transcendence Path. However, before Meng Hao could even call out a greeting, the man up ahead took a step forward, then shuddered and immediately fell to the ground. Then, even as Meng Hao watched, he transformed into a blood mist. It only took a moment for that blood mist to be crushed down into the ground, and completely dispersed.

Moments later, there was no trace of blood left, nor any other indication that the man had existed. It was almost as if what Meng Hao had seen before was just an illusion.

Meng Hao stopped in place to think, his heart pounding. If he hadn't witnessed the man's death, things might have been a bit easier. Ever since three years before, when the explosive increase in pressure had happened without any warning, he had always thought it might be better to know beforehand so he could prepare himself.

But now he wasn't so sure.

Now that he knew where the border existed, he would be able to prepare ahead of time. And yet, that also opened the door for doubt and fear. Moments ago, he had seen a Dao Realm expert crushed into a blood mist, and that left him more than a little reluctant.

After a long moment passed, his eyes flickered brightly, and he took a deep breath. Rotating his cultivation base, he began to walk forward, filled

with determination.

Eventually, he reached the border; if he took another step he would be in exactly the same spot where the Dao Realm expert had been destroyed. He lifted his foot up, and without any trembling or hesitation, he stepped forward.

Rumbling echoed out as incredible pressure exploded down onto him, pressure that was twenty times as powerful as the pressure he had faced upon entering the Transcendence Path.

A boom could be heard as Meng Hao's body began to explode. Blood spattered everywhere, and the cracking of bones echoed out. The pain was so intense that anyone would scream in response, and yet Meng Hao gritted his teeth and held his breath. Massive rumbling sounds echoed out as he rotated his cultivation base and sent out divine sense. Simultaneously, all of his Soul Lamps exploded with power.

Just when he felt like he couldn't hold on any longer, when his body would fully collapse, one of his final five Soul Lamps winked out.

The extinguishing of the Soul Lamp flooded him with life force, like rainfall onto a parched desert. He immediately began to recover, although it still took effort just to stand in place. He closed his eyes for a long time before finally continuing to plod along like a mortal.

"Four lamps left..." he murmured hoarsely, gritting his teeth as he walked along. Extinguishing one Soul Lamp in three years was a bit slow, but was a speed Meng Hao could accept. After all, on the outside, it would have taken hundreds of years to extinguish his remaining Soul Lamps.

However, the deadly pressure in this place could stimulate the potential of one's life force; either you succeeded, or you died.

Three years later, Meng Hao had been on the Transcendence Path for nine years, and was facing pressure beyond imagination. He had originally assumed that the pressure in the next region beyond the twentyfold increase would be that of a thirtyfold increase. It was only upon stepping into that area that he found, not a thirtyfold increase, but fiftyfold increase!

The explosive level of the pressure completely destroyed half of his body. Blood sprayed in all directions, and it was only by the extinguishing of his fourth Soul Lamp that he managed to survive. After some further rest and recovery, he proceeded on.

“Three more lamps!” he thought. His hair was a mess, and his face was ashen, but he clenched his jaw and proceeded along. It was in his twelfth year on the Transcendence Path that he finally caught sight of someone up ahead.

Not just one person, but four!

They were seated cross-legged several hundred meters up ahead, doing breathing exercises. Their cultivation bases made them all 3-Essences Dao Lords, very close to the 4-Essences level.

As Meng Hao neared, their eyes opened, and they couldn’t hold back from being shocked.

“Ancient Realm?”

“The third tribulation can’t be passed by anyone below the Dao Lord level. How did he get here!?”

“From ancient times until now, Ancient Realm cultivators haven’t been prohibited from traveling this path. However, most of them stop before the third tribulation.”

“Could this be a new Chosen from the sect?” These four Dao Lords had been away from the sect for an entire sixty-year-cycle, and were thus unaware of the legendary Fang Mu. Their eyes began to shine brightly as Meng Hao walked up to them.

As he neared, one of them called out in a hoarse voice, “What sect are you from, disciple?”

Chapter 1485: Malicious Intentions!

“The Ninth Sect,” Meng Hao said, looking over at the four Dao Lords.

None of them said even a single word in response. After hearing that Meng Hao was also from the Vast Expanse School, their interest waned. Sometimes plotting, scheming and even open fighting went on between the various factions of the Vast Expanse School. However, most people weren’t willing to bring those conflicts with them into a trial by fire. One could very well end up hurting oneself in so doing.

The four Dao Lords ignored Meng Hao, and he ignored them. He continued walking until he was at the same point along the line as them. There he stopped, and looked at the area up ahead.

Obviously, these four men were sitting in this spot for a reason, and Meng Hao was well aware of exactly why.

“So, not even Dao Lords dare to step past this point?” he thought. Moments ago, the Dao Lords had mentioned a third tribulation. Obviously, the different areas he had entered every three years were the tribulations these people were referring to.

“The first tribulation was tenfold, the second tribulation was twentyfold, and the third tribulation was fiftyfold. Could it be that this fourth tribulation is a hundredfold?” Even as Meng Hao stood there pondering the situation, the Dao Lord who had asked him about his identity earlier opened his eyes.

“The fourth tribulation increases the pressure by a hundredfold,” he said. “You need to be careful, kid. I don’t know how you got here, but... if you step in there without having a 4-Essences cultivation base, you’ll almost certainly be killed.”

Meng Hao turned and clasped hands in thanks to to the Dao Lord. Then he turned back, took a deep breath, and to the shock of the four Dao Lords, took a step forward!

“Are you looking to die?!” That was what all four of the shocked Dao

Lords were thinking as Meng Hao started to walk. Rumbling sounds simultaneously echoed out.

Almost instantly, his legs were shredded to pieces. Half of his body was destroyed! His arms burst into a mist of blood, and in the blink of an eye, the rest of his body was shredded to pieces by the hundredfold pressure!

Only his head remained within the blood mist, as well as... 108 Soul Lamps. Three of those lamps were lit, and the rest were extinguished.

Meng Hao only had his head left, but he roared nonetheless, and blue veins popped out on his skin. Then, his Soul Lamps began to vibrate, and then one of the remaining three suddenly went dark!

After the lamp was extinguished, the blood mist which had exploded out began to form back together into a body. Although it was covered with wounds, Meng Hao managed to take a breath, then cough up a mouthful of blood as he fell to the ground.

The hundredfold pressure continued to crush down onto him as he struggled up into a cross-legged position. Then he closed his eyes, rotating his cultivation base and circulating the life force which had come from extinguishing the Soul Lamp as he fought back against the pressure.

“Impossible!” The four Dao Lords on the other side all stood up, faces covered with expressions of disbelief. All of them were panting, and their eyes were as wide as saucers.

“He’s... he’s actually holding up!”

“Only 4-Essences cultivators can enter the fourth tribulation. Not even we can step in there!”

“I remember three years ago when Dao Lord Flamefire from the Seventh Sect walked in, and was killed instantly....” Their minds were reeling as they stared at Meng Hao.

A moment later, one of them suddenly whispered, “Just now, was I just seeing things, or did he have 108 Soul Lamps?”

The other three gasped. Moments ago, they had been so preoccupied

with the fact that Meng Hao actually took a step forward that they hadn't paid much attention to his Soul Lamps. Now that they thought back, they couldn't help but exchange astonished glances.

"When did someone inhuman like this appear in the sect?"

"I noticed that he only had two lit Soul Lamps. If... if he actually extinguishes those final two, then how powerful will he be?" With each moment that went by, the men were more and more shaken.

A few days later, the group of four looked on with mixed emotions as Meng Hao opened his eyes. He took a deep breath, and then oh-so-slowly rose to his feet. It was difficult to do, but after he finished the movement, he gritted his teeth and began to walk forward, completely ignoring the four Dao Lords.

As he proceeded along, he got farther and farther away, until he disappeared from view. The Dao Lords could do nothing but sit there in silence, completely shaken by the fact that Meng Hao was walking through the tribulation that they themselves could not even enter.

"Only two Soul Lamps left," Meng Hao thought. "The final two...." His vision was swimming, and his breath came in ragged pants as he proceeded along with great difficulty.

"After those two Soul Lamps, I can step into the Dao Realm!

"In that moment, I will be able to form my Essence, and use its power to begin completing the Ninth Hex!

"That is when I will see if my speculations are correct!" After forming the outline of the first sealing mark of the Ninth Hex all those years ago on the Vast Expanse Shrine, he had begun to speculate about a certain matter.

He had the feeling that this clone of his would actually only be able to complete one sealing mark in his single lifetime. Most likely, he wouldn't be able to complete even two, let alone nine.

The Seal the Heavens Hex was simply far too powerful and majestic. It was a Hexing magic that, realistically speaking, shouldn't even be able to

exist in the starry sky of the Vast Expanse.

He took a deep breath as he trudged forward. Another three years passed in the blink of an eye. However, he still hadn't reached the fifth tribulation, the reason being that he was moving much more slowly than before, and also had to rest frequently.

It wasn't until five years later that Meng Hao reached the point where he could start jogging. Only then did he eventually catch sight of the border of the fifth tribulation.

There, he saw cultivators.

There were two of them, seated cross-legged at almost the same position along the path. Astonishingly, both were 4-Essences cultivators, and one of them, a middle-aged man in a black robe, was at the peak of 4-Essences, just around the corner from 5-Essences.

The two men took note of Meng Hao's arrival, and one of them even looked at him with a hostile glare.

"Someone's finally here," said the middle-aged man. "Ancient Realm.... Wow, an Ancient Realm cultivator who can pass through the fourth tribulation. Perfect for our plan...." Obviously, any Ancient Realm cultivator who could make it here would obviously be a very important person in the sect, and most likely a future Paragon.

Because of that, he hesitated for a moment.

In that moment of hesitation, Meng Hao had already jogged up and was approaching the border itself.

The middle-aged man and the other 4-Essences Dao Realm experts exchanged a glance, and when they saw the decisiveness in each other's eyes, they gritted their teeth and cast all doubts aside.

They looked over coldly at Meng Hao, who was now only about one step away from entering the fifth tribulation.

The middle-aged man with the hostile expression didn't seem very anxious, nor did he seem to notice that Meng Hao apparently had the

courage to immediately step into the next region. Only people with incredible power would be able to forego resting and measuring up the next area.

“Kid, why don’t we make a deal...” the middle-aged man said, his voice cold.

“Don’t worry,” said the other Dao Realm expert. “The two of us don’t wish you any harm. In fact, we want to offer you something incredibly helpful.”

Neither of them were paying much attention to where Meng Hao was standing. Both of them were of the opinion that virtually no one would ever do anything except rest here before taking another step.

However, even as the words left their mouths, Meng Hao completely ignored them, and stepped forward, his eyes glittering.

“Wait!!”

“Are you trying to kill yourself?!?” The two Dao Realm experts were completely shocked, and rose to their feet anxiously. As for Meng Hao, a violent tremor ran through him.

The pressure that was crushing down on him had rocketed directly to... one hundred and fifty times the original pressure!

His body instantly collapsed, and not even his head remained intact. He transformed into a mist of blood, provoking grim expressions from the two Dao Realm experts. They had been waiting a long time for someone to come along and fall into their scheme; how could they ever have guessed that the person to show up would be a complete idiot?

“What a moron that kid is! He deserved to die a worse death than he did for stepping in there like that!”

“Who cares if he dies or not? He’s screwed things up for us now. Dammit!” However, their curses were suddenly cut short, and their jaws dropped in shock.

The blood mist that was Meng Hao was acting differently than similar

situations they had seen in the past. Instead of dispersing, it began to form back together. It only took a moment for it to once again turn into the vague shape of a person.

When they looked closer, they were shocked to find that... 108 Soul Lamps could be seen within that figure. Two of those Soul Lamps were lit, with the rest being extinguished.

“This....”

It was at this point that one of those two Soul Lamps suddenly winked out. As a result, the life force remaining in the blood mist caused it to begin to form together, even as the intense pressure weighed down!

Apparently, some incredible power was forcing the blood mist back into the shape of a body!

However, the intense pressure seemed to be interfering, as if the power of one extinguished Soul Lamp wasn't enough to complete the task. But then... the final Soul Lamp flickered, and then, to the disbelief of the two Dao Realm experts, suddenly...

Turned dark!

In that moment, everything went completely silent. Then, a Heaven-shaking, Earth-shattering blast of energy shot out from the blood mist, sending the two Dao Realm experts staggering backward in shock!

Chapter 1486: The Clone Passes Away In Meditation

The peak 4-Essences cultivators outside of the fifth tribulation couldn't help but be astonished by the intense energy buffeting them.

Everything shook violently, as though some invisible force were battering the lands.

At the same time, the blood mist continued to converge into a body.

The face wasn't distinguishable, only the fact that it was a body. Furthermore, there were 108 Soul Lamps within that body, each of which resembled a divine being sitting there cross-legged in meditation.

The shape they formed burst with the aura of an Immortal, as if a true and authentic Immortal were now coming into the world!

The pressure in the area instantly attacked the Immortal aura, forcibly blasting it away, causing cracking sounds to emanate out, and tiny rifts to snake out in the air, as though... the air were about to be destroyed.

The two peak 4-Essences cultivators edged away. They could scarcely believe what was happening as the aura destabilized their minds and crushed down on their cultivation bases. They almost couldn't even breathe.

Next, another astonishing, terrifying aura surged out from within Meng Hao.

This time, it wasn't from the 108 Soul Lamps. Instead, there were nine sealing marks, which shone as radiantly as the sun as they swirled around, emanating a pressure that could shake Heaven and Earth.

The pressure caused blood to spray out of the mouths of the 4-Essences Dao Realm experts. They were sent tumbling backward as if by a powerful attack, and even as they screamed, their fleshly bodies were shredded to pieces.

Their bedraggled souls emerged, shrieking. They retreated by several

thousand meters, shaking with unprecedented terror.

“What... what are those sealing marks?!?!”

“One look, one single look was enough to destroy our bodies!!” They wanted to flee, but the intense pressure crushing down on them made it impossible for them to retreat. From the look of things, they were about to be completely destroyed.

It was at this point that the nine sealing marks within Meng Hao began to emanate streams of light that connected to the 108 Soul Lamps. The radiant light seemed to burst with an Immortal aura, making them Immortal Threads that connected through all of the Soul Lamps, forming a circle, forming... an Immortal Root!

A spirit like an Immortal, and a foundation that reached as deep as the root of a tree. This was an Immortal Root!

“He’s definitely not in the Ancient Realm. That aura... it’s terrifying! It’s like a Paragon!”

“That’s... that’s an Immortal Root?” The 4-Essences Dao Realm experts were shaking violently, and their souls seemed to be fading away.

The Immortal Root was something legendary within the Vast Expanse School. Supposedly, all cultivators had Immortal Threads inside of their bodies, and when their cultivation base reached the pinnacle, or if their bloodline was powerful enough, those Immortal Threads would form together into an Immortal Root.

Only by possessing an Immortal Root could someone truly be considered... an Immortal!

When Meng Hao extinguished the last of his Soul Lamps and entered the Dao Realm, an Immortal Root appeared.

Because of that Immortal Root, something very strange happened.

His 108th Soul Lamp became the Immortal Root, which in turn created something like a huge tree. It had nine branches, which were connected to the nine sealing marks inside of him. They were like Immortal fruits

growing on that tree!

Among those nine branches, the first began to shine with dazzling, multicolored light, and pulsed with colorful bursts of something that looked like lightning.

As for the other eight branches, they were dark, as though they lacked any life force whatsoever.

As the first branch of the Immortal Root pulsed with light, the first sealing mark began to shine, until it was blindingly bright!

As of this moment, the first sealing mark was complete!

A tremor ran through Meng Hao, a Heaven-sealing aura pulsed out from within him, causing everything to shake, and a huge wind to kick up. At the same time, the aura of the Dao Realm exploded out.

Then, his eyes opened.

Stepping into the Dao via Nirvana Fruit!

Meng Hao's clone was actually formed from a Nirvana Fruit, not for the purpose of living a new life, but to utilize that bloodline power to be able to step into the Dao Realm more quickly than normal!

His eyes shone with light so radiant that a single glance from him seemed capable of completely absorbing the souls of the two 4-Essences Dao Realm experts!

Normally speaking, Dao Realm Tribulation should have descended. However, there was something special about the Transcendence Path that made it impossible for the Tribulation to find him. It couldn't even sense the Dao Realm Aura on him, let alone come to him.

Meng Hao sat there silently. The sudden transformations which had occurred because of the extinguishing of his final Soul Lamp were surprising, and yet, actually served to confirm his previous speculation.

"In this life... I can't complete the Ninth Hex. I can only complete one of the necessary sealing marks." Meng Hao looked into the colorful light cast by the first branch of the Immortal Root, and saw multicolored sparks

flickering about. He poured his consciousness into them, and as he did, his life flashed before his eyes.

He saw himself floating down the river, and then saw the scholar carrying him away. He saw the old man playing with him, and then saw his Seventh Year Tribulation. After that, he awoke and joined the Ninth Sect.

He rose from mortal to Immortal, took Yan'er as his apprentice, and then stepped onto the Transcendence Path.... Those were the things he saw.

They were the complete memories of a lifetime, from beginning to end.

"So... that's how it is," he murmured.

"The path I've picked is correct. The Ninth Hex is far too shocking, and shouldn't even exist. Therefore, in my clone's single life, I can only form one part out of nine.

"Well, that's fine. As long as I'm on the right track, everything will be worth it!"

He sensed the 108 Soul Lamps which formed the Immortal Root, something that his true self had never experienced in all of his cultivation. That Immortal Root was feeding and nourishing the sealing marks of the Ninth Hex. After a moment, his eyes shone with understanding.

"The Immortal Root is the focus of the complete Ninth Hex. With that Immortal Root, the nine sealing marks can be completed.

"As for this body, it has walked to the end of its path. If I want to form the second sealing mark, I'll have to do it another way....

"Even if my clone ended up becoming a Paragon, I would end up being stuck with only this first branch. What I need now... is that second branch.

"Each branch requires simply the memories of a lifetime. In that case, it seems this clone of mine truly must become independent. To my true self, this clone is my fourth life. But now that this Immortal Root has appeared, this clone... has experienced a first life!

“Nine branches. Nine lives.... When the memories of all those lives are combined, and come back from reincarnation, that is when the Ninth Hex, the Seal the Heavens Hex, can be completed!” The more he reached enlightenment regarding the matter, the more he realized that the Immortal Root and the nine branches truly confirmed his speculations from before.

“Reincarnation.... I need to live nine different lives, and save the memories of those lives, regardless of what they are.

“The best thing to do... is seal the memories away. In the end, after the ninth life concludes, I’ll reawaken.” After a bit of hesitation, he sat there quietly, and finally, sighed.

In some ways, he didn’t wish to part with his current life. He turned his head, and although he wasn’t really sure of what direction he was facing, he had the feeling... that he was looking at Planet Vast Expanse.

That was where the Ninth Sect was, and that was where his apprentice Yan’er was.

What he worried about most in this particular life was Yan’er.

“Seal my memories, sever my thoughts, enter reincarnation....” He sighed, waving his sleeve. The blood mist was gone, and he stood just inside the fifth tribulation, eyes shining with increasing determination.

“Enough hesitation,” he thought. He pushed his hand out in front of him, causing the air to shatter and a vortex to appear. Apparently, this rumbling vortex was the doorway into reincarnation.

As it opened, Meng Hao stretched his hand out toward the souls of the two 4-Essences Dao Realm experts who had been plotting against him. Before they could plead for mercy, he crushed them.

Rumbling sounds echoed out as their souls transformed into motes of light, something like fuel for the vortex. The aura of reincarnation grew stronger.

“Yan’er,” he said softly, “our relationship of Master and apprentice in this life... is now over.” He closed his eyes, seemingly recalling past

memories. After a long moment passed, he opened them again, and they were bright and clear. Then, he sat down cross-legged, as he... chose to pass away in meditation!

His body gradually began to shine, but at the same time it withered up. In the end, when he was nothing more than a shriveled corpse, his forehead opened up and a soul appeared, shining with Immortal light.

Within that soul was an Immortal Root, and nine sealing marks. That was everything which Meng Hao's clone had cultivated in his life. The eyes of the soul were bright, like that of an innocent infant. That was because all of the memories of the life he had just lived were severed and sealed away deep inside.

The soul of Meng Hao's clone stepped into the reincarnation vortex, and vanished. He was leaving... to begin the clone's second life.

Everything grew silent. Meng Hao's body remained there, seated cross-legged, motionless....

Meanwhile, back in the Ninth Sect of the Vast Expanse School, Yan'er was in the middle of meditating when suddenly, she shivered. Her eyes opened. It felt as if a cord connecting her to something had just been broken.

Trembling, she rushed over to her Master's secluded meditation facilities. When she pushed the door open and looked over to where her Master's soul fire was, she felt like she had been struck by lightning. She stood there quietly, tears running down her face that seemed as if they would never stop.

After a very long moment passed, she coughed up a mouthful of blood. From the look in her eyes, it was as if her entire world... had collapsed.

"Master...."

Meng Hao's soul fire, which had rested there for so long... had been extinguished.

Chapter 1487: Reincarnation!

Time passed. It was the beginning of spring, and on Planet Vast Expanse's eighth continent, the lands were just beginning to recover from winter. In one particular town, a spring thunderstorm brought a bit of snow with the rain, and a child was born, a boy.

Ten years sped by in a flash, and child was now a young man. Because he was intelligent, and came from a good family, he ended up walking the path of a scholar. He took the Imperial examinations, and a few years later left home to work for the current dynasty of the mortal empire which ruled the eighth continent.

He rose through the ranks quickly, eventually earning a spot in the Imperial court. He soon became infatuated with palace intrigue, something at which he excelled. Eventually he earned a status as high as the sun at noon; the emperor even appointed him as the designated foster-father for his children.

His name was Fang Hao.

Nobody in the capital city of that mortal world was unaware of the name. Of course, cultivators would never pay attention to a single mortal. However, in the current dynasty, he was the ultimate power.

Fang Hao, the most powerful person in the empire next to the emperor himself, was somewhat of an eccentric. He never married, and never sired any offspring. At the age of eighty, he was no longer part of the court, but the people loyal to him, and thus his power, held sway over the entire government.

A word from him was just as powerful as an Imperial edict.

One winter, the snow started to fall, and screams rose up in the capital city. Soldiers were fighting in the streets, filling the city with icy bleakness that seemed colder than the winter itself.

In one corner of the city was a beautiful plum garden, currently blanketed in snow. There, an old man sat in a wheelchair, being pushed

through the garden by a servant.

The old man wore a thick, warm coat, and his face was covered with wrinkles. He had an aura of death to him, and his eyes were nothing more than narrow slits. At the moment, he looked just like any other old person might look.

“Lai Fu, come here....” the old man said softly. Instantly, the middle-aged servant hurried around in front of the old man and bowed, a respectful expression on his face, eyes shining with reverence.

The old man’s voice was hoarse as he continued, “I remember mother saying that I was born during the last snowfall in winter.

“Now that I’m old, I keep thinking back to old times....

“I’ve been dreaming a lot lately, dreaming of a different world. I feel like I’m getting closer and closer to actually seeing that world. How interesting.” The old man looked around at the plum garden, then looked up into the sky at the falling snowflakes.

His servant did nothing but listen respectfully.

“Tell the third son that I demand his head on a platter. I’ve never liked him.

“It’s time to end this war of succession. The eighth son is a good kid, pick him.” From the calm way the old man spoke, it sounded as if he were speaking about some trivial matters, not a rebellious war of succession which affected the entire empire!

But that was just how this old man was. His eyes opened wide, and although they were somewhat clouded, there was a power shining therein that was beyond the ordinary.

Now, he was no longer just an old man. He was a supreme being who had the power to determine life or death in the empire!

This was Fang Hao, who was also... the second life of Meng Hao’s clone!

The servant voiced his consent, and a few days later, a head was delivered to the old man. The rebellion over succession was ended by a

single word. Suddenly, the winter didn't seem as cold as it had been.

A few months later, the last snowstorm of winter hit. The old man sat there watching the snow fall, and slowly closed his eyes. When he breathed his last breath, his forehead opened up and a soul flew out. It had nine sealing marks, and an Immortal Root. Two of the branches of that Immortal Root shone with brilliant light, and the second sealing mark gradually lit up.

The second life for Meng Hao's clone had ended. The entire country went into mourning.

His funeral hall was packed inside and out. All of the officials were present, and common people from near and far came as well. A proclamation was made that, throughout the entire empire, people were only permitted to wear black or white.

The old man had no idea any of that was happening.

His memories were buried and sealed. When he awoke, he was on the seventh continent, born into a family of hunters. It was winter.

When he came into the world, a hearty and excited voice rang out: "The son of Tiger Shi will definitely be the best hunter in the land!"

His third life had begun.

Meanwhile, Meng Hao's true self was far, far away from Planet Vast Expanse, speeding through the starry sky. Vicious-looking black armor covered over half his body, even his left arm!

"I found the sixth mirror shard!" he thought. He looked exhausted, and a bit pale in the face. He had already been away from Planet Vast Expanse for more than a hundred years. During that time, he had faced many dangers, and had already visited hundreds of worlds that were inhabited by living beings.

He was shocked by how difficult it was to acquire the copper mirror shards. Each one was a precious treasure which was guarded carefully by whoever had come to possess it.

Because of the vast stretches of time involved, the mirror shards had passed through many hands, and had all ended up among peak 9-Essences beings. Of course, all such beings were the type who had existed in that stage for countless years.

Furthermore, the majority of those beings were not cultivators, but rather, other strange entities that existed within the Vast Expanse.

Meng Hao had tracked down the fifth mirror shard in a world that had been formed into the shape of a mirror. In that world, he found what turned out to be an undying enemy. They fought back and forth for decades upon decades, and Meng Hao killed that enemy so many times it was impossible to count. Eventually, he found the weakness of the world, and only by threatening to destroy it could he convince the enemy to hand over the mirror shard.

The sixth mirror shard was even more difficult. The difficulty there lay not in a powerful opponent, but rather... the fact that the mirror shard lay in a sludge, a sludge so large that every particle which made it up was a separate dimension.

As for where exactly the mirror shard was in all that, the only way Meng Hao could find out... was to search through the dimensions one by one.

That search took him nearly a hundred years.

In addition to the actual mirror shards, there were other benefits to his adventures. Meng Hao's experiences left him with a much deeper understanding of the starry sky of the Vast Expanse. As the decades passed, his cultivation base climbed higher and higher, especially after the battles with the powerful enemies he was facing. Furthermore, he was gaining enlightenment of all of his eight Essences.

He wasn't even sure exactly where his battle prowess was at this point.

However, he did know that with his current cultivation base, he wouldn't even need to use the copper mirror shards to fight the Sect Leader and the others. He would be able to fight them on his own power, even if the Sect Leader, Sha Jiudong, and Bai Wuchen joined forces.

In the starry sky of the Vast Expanse, the only people who could fight Meng Hao would be those eccentric 9-Essences experts who had lived for countless years, and who were just under the level of Transcendence.

Every time he defeated a powerful expert, he would extend an offer to join him. He was always refused, and would never press the matter, but would simply leave, a slight smile on his face.

However, he always took note of the locations occupied by those experts. Once he finished forming his Ninth Hex, he would return, whether he had Transcended or not. Then, whether they wanted to or not, he would enlist them to help take back his home!

As Meng Hao sped along, he could sense that his clone was entering his third life. Because the clone's memories were all sealed, it made his connection to Meng Hao grow weaker. However, the basic resonance was still there. Although he couldn't control his clone's body after it had been reincarnated, he could see what was happening. He had the feeling that if he attempted to forcibly interfere, a disharmony would occur, which would cause even more problems in finishing the Ninth Hex.

"The second life is over, and the second sealing mark is finished. It seems it will take quite a few years... for my clone to complete the work with the Ninth Hex.

"When he finishes, I'll be able to... return to the Mountain and Sea Realm!" His expression was one of intense anticipation. He took a deep breath and began to speed in the direction of the seventh copper mirror shard.

It was around that same time that, back on Planet Vast Expanse, the Sect Leader and the others were once again organizing an expedition into the necropolis.

Furthermore, another Chosen had appeared within the Vast Expanse School, someone whose fame rivaled even Fang Mu.

It was... Yan'er!

Bells rang as one Heaven after another was summoned. When she

summoned the Ninth Heaven, the entire Vast Expanse School was shaken. And she didn't stop at one Vast Expanse Shrine. She followed the same path as her master, challenging the Vast Expanse Shrines of all of the nine sects, leaving her name there in the rankings.

She took second place in all of them, and rocked Planet Vast Expanse with the Ninth Heaven.

Countless people were shocked, and couldn't help but draw comparisons between her and Fang Mu. The commotion her actions caused shook the Vast Expanse School without cease.

Currently, she stood there upon the Ninth Heaven in the Ninth Sect, looking up into the Heavens. Within her eyes could be seen reminiscence, contemplation, and determination.

Just as she had sworn nearly a hundred years before, she would walk the Transcendence Path!

After seeing that her Master's soul fire had been extinguished, she had sworn an oath which became the focus of her entire life.

Throughout the years, a few people had come back from the Transcendence Path with stories about how Fang Mu had passed away into meditation. Supposedly, his corpse still rested on the path. Strangely, though, it was impossible to actually touch the corpse.

Such stories were told by more than one person, so they had to be true.

However, Yan'er couldn't believe that her master would simply perish on the Transcendence Path. So she would follow the same road as him. She would go see for herself what exactly had occurred.

A few days later, Yan'er, the second most astonishing Chosen to appear in the Vast Expanse School, extinguished the last of her Soul Lamps, and stepped into the Dao Realm. She experienced a shocking Dao Realm Tribulation that was witnessed by many. When it was all over, she went to the Ninth Sect's Paragon, just like her Master had, and said the same words.

"I wish to tread the Transcendence Path. Paragon, please open the

portal!" As her words echoed out through the air of the Ninth Sect, countless disciples looked on wordlessly. Mixed emotions could be seen on their faces. During the past hundred years or so after Fang Mu had passed away, she had gone from being battered and broken, to being powerful.

She was no longer the little girl she had once been. To these people, she had long since become... their Eldest Sister.

In response to her request, an ancient voice echoed out: "Why are you doing this too....?"

She clasped hands and bowed, voice ringing with determination as she said, "It doesn't matter, Paragon, I've made up my mind!"

Chapter 1488: Little Tiger Shi

After a long moment, the Ninth Sect's Paragon responded with a sigh. "Back then, I should never have let Fang Mu open the portal to the Transcendence Path. This time... I shall not permit such a thing to happen again!"

The death of Fang Mu had been a devastating blow to the Ninth Sect. In contrast, the Chosen from the other eight sects had breathed sighs of relief.

They no longer felt as if a huge weight were hanging over their heads. But then... not a hundred years later, Yan'er accomplished the same feat as her Master, and placed that weight right back where it had been.

When Yan'er heard the response of the Ninth Sect's Paragon, she closed her eyes, then prostrated herself on the ground. There she remained, unmoving. Apparently, if she was refused entrance, she would remain in place right there.

She was completely focused. This was her mission in life, and she was not making a request. What she was doing far exceeded a request....

She wanted to seek her Master, to confirm whether or not he had truly perished. That was her obsession, and it would never, ever be wiped away.

One month. Six months. A year. Three years....

Spring. Summer. Autumn. Countless days and nights passed, and Yan'er remained prostrated there the entire time. No matter who came to try to convince her to give up, she remained rooted in place. She was focused, and she was determined. People were shaken, and couldn't help but think of that other even more stunning figure from the past.

This Master and apprentice were truly alike in many ways.

Five years later, rumbling filled the sky as a huge rift opened, and a staircase descended from up above.

"Thank you, Paragon," she said. Her face was a bit wan, but she took a deep breath and prepared to begin walking up the stairs. But then, a gentle

force poured into her body, wiping away her exhaustion and filling her with more energy than before.

“Make it back... alive,” said the Ninth Sect’s Paragon, his voice soft. After the five years which had passed, even he understood the level of Yan’er’s focus, and was left sighing. He wasn’t capable of hindering Fang Mu’s only apprentice.

Rather than just watch her prostrate herself in such a manner and wait for her life force to wither away, he had instead...given in, and let her go.

As the Paragon’s sigh echoed out, Yan’er clasped hands and bowed, then looked up at the rift, her eyes shining with determination, and reminiscence.

“Master, Yan’er is going to come find you,” she said. With that, she burst into motion, flying up the stairs and disappearing into the rift.

The year that Yan’er left, the rest of the Chosen in the Vast Expanse School didn’t feel as if a weight had been lifted, but instead, that it had sunk down further.

Master and apprentice had both stepped onto the Transcendence Path, whereas the Chosen... were still fighting over the Vast Expanse Shrine. It struck them as being similar to the difference between mud and the clouds.

Yan’er slowly made her way along the Transcendence Path. She wanted to go quickly, but was not able to. As for Meng Hao, he had been able to pass through the first tribulation in three years. But Yan’er couldn’t match that speed. She needed much more time, and yet, her determination never lessened. In fact, it increased.

“Master, I’m definitely going to find your remains,” she murmured. The intense pressure weighing down on her made progress difficult, yet she trudged on. She was followed by the mastiff, who quietly walked next to her the entire time.

Time passed in a blur. Fifteen years went by.

The boy who had been born more a dozen or so years earlier in the

mountainous forests of the seventh continent was now a young man. He had become one of the most outstanding hunters in the village, and although he wasn't very tall, he was exceptionally agile. At the moment, he was dashing through the trees, a hunting bow in his hand. After enough time passed for half an incense stick to burn, he suddenly stopped in place, then nocked an arrow to his bow with lightning speed.

A thrum could be heard, and the arrow sped through the air to plunge into the head of a black bear, roughly thirty meters away. It pierced in by about four inches, enraging the bear but not killing it. The bear roared and began to charge through the trees toward the young man.

The young man calmly fell back, loosing more arrows into the bear. Blood flowed, causing the animal's fury to mount as it raced forward. Then, the young man suddenly stopped in place and looked coolly at the beast.

Seeing that the young man had stopped moving, the bear picked up speed. Just when it was almost upon him, the ground suddenly caved in, and a huge hole appeared. The bear fell in, to be impaled upon the countless wooden spikes which had been driven into the ground at the bottom of the pit.

A howl echoed out as the bear died.

The young man took a deep breath, his eyes shining with excitement. He carefully dropped down into the pit, extracted the bear, and then headed back to the village, the carcass slung over his shoulders.

By the time the boy arrived home with the bear, he was soaked with sweat. Sitting in the courtyard was a muscular, middle-aged man with a broad smile on his face. His right leg was bound tightly; a few days before, he had broken it on a hunting expedition. Thankfully, he was in good health, and had visited the doctor immediately after the accident occurred. In the future, he would have some problems with the leg, but nothing too significant.

"Great! The Shi Clan's little tiger cub can hunt bears now!"

The young man hurried over, smiling. About then, the door opened, and

a middle-aged woman appeared. She looked dotingly upon the young man, tousling his hair for a moment before glaring at her husband.

The man shrank back sheepishly from the woman, then, trying to sound manly, chuckled and said, "Heh heh. He's no baby any more. I think when I was his age I could hunt bears too. It's only natural that the son of Tiger Hu could do the same."

The young man smiled. The warmth and love in the house was palpable. This young man was the third life of Meng Hao's clone. Little Tiger Hu. 1

The warmth and love in the household persisted for two more years. But then one winter, his father went missing on a hunt, and the warmth faded away.

That night, it was as if the boy's world collapsed. His mother refused to believe that his father, the best hunter in the area, someone who knew the local terrain like the back of his hand, would simply go missing. Therefore, she went out to search for him. Again and again, night after night.

She never found him. A year later, his mother went blind from grief. Two years later... she passed away.

Before dying, she clasped Little Tiger Hu's hand in her own, and her vacant eyes seemed to stare off into the distance as she whispered, "Little Tiger, your father couldn't have just gone missing...."

Little Tiger Hu wept that day, just as he had wept the day his father went missing. From then on, he refused to live in the village, and also refused to marry. He lived out in the mountains, where he searched relentlessly for his father.

Time passed. One year. Another. And another.

He combed all of the local mountains, high and low. For twenty years he searched. One spring day, in a far corner of the mountains, he found a rusty knife. The instant he saw it, his eyes turned red, for he knew that it was his father's knife.

It was the first clue he had ever found. He diligently began to search the area, and about 300 meters away from the knife, he unearthed a skeleton.

After examining the skeleton, he noticed a place on the right thigh where it had been broken once, whereupon he dropped to his knees and kowtowed. This was his father who had gone missing all those years ago.

His mother never believed that his father would have gone missing, and neither had Little Tiger Hu. He had always believed that his father was too great a hunter. Even if he encountered some dangerous beast, he would have been able to come up with a way to escape with his life. Besides, the most dangerous animals in the mountains were bears.

After examining his father's remains, he confirmed that there was no evidence that he had been attacked by a wild animal. Instead, what he found was a wound on his father's spine, the mark of an arrow. Twenty years ago, he had been shot in the back.

Little Tiger Hu was an expert when it came to bows and arrows, so to him, the evidence was clear.

He looked at his father's skeleton and smiled, a smile both bitter and vicious. Then, he carried his father's skeleton back to the village and buried it next to his mother. He erected a burial mound over the two of them, which he knelt in front of and murmured, "Dad, I'll get revenge for you, no matter what price I have to pay...."

A long time passed before he finally rose to his feet, and when he did, he seemed even colder than before. With that, he turned and left.

More time passed. Ten years later, Little Tiger Hu was an old man. He had spent the last decade using every method and means at his disposal to investigate the truth about his father. In the end, he confirmed that the killer was from a clan in another hunting village in the mountains.

The murderer who had killed his father was still alive.

Little Tiger Hu didn't bother to investigate the details of why the murder had occurred. All he knew was that when you killed someone, you had to pay the price with your own life.

One snowy night, when everything was freezing and cold, he entered the house of the killer. When he emerged, he reeked of blood, and was

carrying a severed head. He had killed the old man, and when his children fought back, he killed them too. He had slaughtered the whole family.

He ended up being fatally injured, but still managed to stagger back to his own village, severed head in hand. He threw the head down in front of his parents' grave, and then sagged to the ground. He began to drink alcohol, and talk softly to his parents in words that no one could hear.

The snow fell harder. The seriousness of his injuries grew worse by the minute. He was like an oil lamp on the verge of sputtering out. As his consciousness faded, he suddenly seemed to catch sight of his parents.

After a while, he closed his eyes and lay down on the burial mound, as if he were reuniting with his parents, and once again feeling the warmth and love that he had as a child.

The snow covered his corpse, but it couldn't cover up the soul which flew out of his forehead. As the soul rose up into the sky, it looked back at the burial mound and sighed. Within the soul, it was possible to see that the third sealing mark was shining with radiant light.

The soul clasped hands and bowed to the corpse, then turned and reentered the cycle of reincarnation.

His third life was over, and the fourth life... was beginning.

It was in that moment that Yan'er entered the second tribulation in the Transcendence Path. The tenfold pressure caused her to grit her teeth, but she continued on. Her cultivation base was now at the peak of the 1-Essence level.

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1. Remember Dong Hu, one of the four boys taken to the Reliance Sect by Xu Qing in chapter 1? His nickname was Little Tiger.

Chapter 1489: Chen Lei

The clone's fourth life also began in winter, on the sixth continent, in a sprawling mansion.

In addition to the cultivators on Planet Vast Expanse, there was also a warrior class. In some ways, warriors also existed on a higher level than mortals, although to cultivators they were little more than ants.

In his fourth life, Meng Hao's clone was born as the Young Lord of the mansion. The mansion was located in the capital city of the mortal world of the sixth continent. For some years, it had been inhabited by a clan which had been founded by one of the most powerful warriors in the land. In fact, in the mortal world, he was known as an Arch-Warrior.

The Arch-Warrior's surname was Chen. The day Meng Hao was born, a thunderstorm raged outside, and so he came to be known as Chen Lei. 1

On the day the clone's fourth life began, Meng Hao's true self was speeding through the starry sky of the Vast Expanse, away from the location where the seventh copper mirror shard had been located. Behind him echoed an enraged roar.

A dust storm exploded out, filling the starry sky, transforming into an enormous head. Its face appeared to be enraged, and yet, was too frightened of Meng Hao to go chasing after him. Its roaring caused the starry sky to tremble.

"The day I unseal myself, I'll come looking for you!" raged the face. "I'll wipe out your entire bloodline. I'll eradicate everyone connected to your Karma!"

Meng Hao's true self smiled and responded in a cold voice: "You won't have to come looking for me. I'll come back for you before that seal is unraveled."

The difficulty in acquiring this mirror shard had exceeded that of all the previous ones. Despite his current level of power, he had experienced many dangerous situations before managing to get his hands on it and

make an escape.

He flew along, an excited expression on his face. He now had only one more mirror shard to collect before he could call out to the copper mirror. By this point, he was already able to get a general feeling for where the copper mirror was, although it was impossible to narrow down enough of a direction to search for it directly.

“Once I get that last mirror shard, I’ll be able to call out to the copper mirror!” His eyes shone with anticipation as he shot in the direction of the eighth mirror shard.

Even considering the speed he was capable of, it took him ten years to reach his destination. As he neared the location of the eighth shard, he frowned.

There was no vortex here. Instead, he saw a flower!

It was astonishingly large, about as big as half of Planet Vast Expanse.

It’s roots seemed to meld into the void itself, and as for the flower, it was not in a state of bloom. It was still little more than a bud. However, the aura it emanated caused even Meng Hao to shiver in fear.

He could clearly sense that the eighth copper mirror shard was located within that flower bud. However, no matter what divine abilities he unleashed, he couldn’t even scratch the surface of the flower bud.

From what he could sense, the flower was currently in a state of growth, and after some time passed, it would bloom naturally, without any interference or assistance from him.

“I just have to wait until it blooms...?” he thought, frowning. After a moment passed, he tried out a few more divine abilities, but in the end, sighed in defeat.

“I guess it doesn’t matter. My clone is still in his fourth life. He needs a bit more time. I guess... I’ll just wait here and watch the flower grow.” His eyes flickered as he made some augury calculations. “At the fastest, it will probably take a hundred years, and at the slowest, a few hundred. However, once it blooms... I’ll be able to enter. Then, the eighth mirror

shard will be mine.” With that, he flickered into motion, appearing on one of the flower’s leaves, where he sat down cross-legged, closed his eyes, and began to meditate quietly.

Time passed. Some years later on the sixth continent of Planet Vast Expanse, his clone’s fourth life, Chen Lei, was no longer an infant. He was now ten years old, and yet was already an important person in the clan mansion.

He had a high status, and was shockingly talented. He had advanced by leaps and bounds in his cultivation of the way of warriors, and already had developed inner qi. He had even come to be called the Junior Arch-Warrior!

Despite his talents, he wasn’t very interested in training, and spent most of his time playing. His parents weren’t happy about that, nor was his grandfather, the Arch-Warrior who had started this whole clan. However, they could do little more than sigh.

In the final analysis, it could be said that Chen Lei grew up quite pampered. In fact, when he finally reached the marrying age, he suddenly became obsessed with traveling. He took his servants all over the country, and by the time he lost interest in that, he was already thirty years old. His parents thought that he had finally reached the point of being ready to settle down, and were about to arrange a marriage....

But then Chen Lei suddenly fell in love with a girl. She was a very important person, being the daughter of the emperor. She was on an outing once when Chen Lei ran into her, and he was instantly smitten. After that, he poured all of his energy into pursuing her.

He lavished her with gifts to gain favor, and did virtually anything she asked him to do. It got to the point that the entire clan was dragged into the matter, and soon everyone began to suffer because of it. Chen Lei’s grandfather was gradually weakening in his old age, and his parents, despite being powerful warriors, were not Arch-Warriors. Because of Chen Lei’s pursuit of this beautiful girl, the entire clan entered a state of clear decline.

At one point in his pursuit of the princess, she manipulated him into killing an important court official, which instigated a huge catastrophe. In order to save Chen Lei's life, the clan had to part with all of its remaining wealth. In addition, his grandfather ended up serving the emperor and performing all sorts of dangerous tasks, which pushed him closer and closer to the grave.

His grandfather had originally assumed that this would be a wakeup call for Chen Lei. How could he ever have imagined that, despite waking up to reality, Chen Lei would then become entranced with Immortal cultivation? The clan was destitute, and Chen Lei was almost forty years old, and yet he still decided to head out to search for the path to Immortality.

He walked that path for an entire decade, and yet made little progress.

Ten years later, he was half a century old. His hair was graying, and he was growing weaker physically. It was with listless eyes that he finally returned home, only to find an empty and abandoned mansion, as well as numerous gravestones.

Everyone was dead. The second year after he left, his grandfather had passed away. In the eighth year, his parents had been killed by a powerful enemy. All the other members of the clan were slaughtered, and it was only because of the kindness of the surviving servants that anyone had been buried at all.

When Chen Lei saw all of this, his mind went blank. It rained that day, and he ended up standing in the downpour, shivering. Grief filled him, and he began to weep, his tears mixing in with the rainwater as they fell to the ground.

"Dad.... Mom.... Grandpa...." Now he truly awakened. He thought back to his life, and he suddenly wanted to laugh. He recalled the grand aspirations of his youth, how he had developed inner qi at such a young age, and how he had thought his entire life would be simple and easy. He had always thought that as long as he wanted to succeed in something hard enough, he would.

He had loved the finer things in life. He had traveled the world. He had

fallen in love with a beautiful princess, and thrown away vast sums of wealth to try to win her heart. In the end, she used him to kill someone, someone he should never have killed. Thus had disaster been wrought.

He dragged his clan into ruin, and then ran off to practice cultivation. Now that he had returned, Chen Lei felt completely useless, a sinner who had killed his entire family and clan.

In his bitterness, he laughed until he coughed up blood, and then collapsed onto the ground, where he lay, pelted by the falling rain.

The next day, the rain stopped. Chen Lei woke up, and looked even older than before. Although he was only fifty, it was as if he had already had one foot in his coffin.

From that day on, a new gravekeeper lived in the mansion, who would often contemplate his life, and his past madness.

Time passed. Ten years later, his back was hunched with age. He could tell that his life was nearing its end. That winter, it was extremely cold. One bright morning, snow began to fall, and he suddenly heard the sound of horse hooves. Off in the distance, a military procession could be seen.

Soldiers rode horses in tight formation around a palanquin. As the procession neared, someone in the palanquin apparently said something to the soldiers, and they all stopped moving. A pretty young woman emerged, dressed in expensive clothing. Next to her was an old lady, who she supported with her arm as they walked toward the mansion.

“Grandmother, why did we stop here?” the young woman asked, sounding a bit puzzled.

“When I saw this place, I thought of an old friend,” replied the old woman. She was an old-timer, but had aged well, and wore expensive clothing just like the young woman. Few wrinkles could be seen on her face, which radiated a healthy glow.

The grandmother and granddaughter stopped outside of the barren mansion. The granddaughter was polite, and didn’t ask any further questions. As for the old woman, mixed emotions could be seen on her

face, as though she was thinking about things that had happened once upon a time. There was even a bit of remorse in her eyes.

After a long moment passed, the old woman sighed, and was about to turn and leave, when her granddaughter suddenly said, "Grandmother, someone's there."

The young woman pointed as the front door of the mansion opened, and Chen Lei appeared, stooped over like an old man.

Almost immediately, soldiers rushed forward protectively. The old woman studied Chen Lei's face, and a touch of uncertainty appeared in her expression.

"You are...?" she asked.

Chen Lei bowed his head and replied in a raspy voice, "One of the servants here. I watch over the graves."

"Have you lived here for a long time?" the old woman asked.

"Ten years," he replied softly.

The old woman didn't respond at first. When she did, she asked, "The Young Lord from this place... did he... ever come back?"

Chen Lei opened his mouth as if to respond, then closed it and simply shook his head.

The old woman stood there in silence for another long moment. Then she called for the soldiers to leave two pieces of silver to help pay for the maintenance of the graves. With that, she returned to the palanquin, and the procession began to move on. As it did, the old woman pulled open the palanquin curtain and looked back at Chen Lei. This time, she could clearly see his profile, and suddenly, a tremor ran through her.

Oh so slowly, her eyes went blank, and she closed the curtain.

The procession disappeared off into the distance.

Chen Lei ignored the two pieces of silver and looked up at the falling snow. How could he not have recognized that old woman? She was the very princess he had fallen in love with all those years ago.

Murmuring to himself in a voice that only he could hear, he walked back into the mansion.

The snow began to fall harder.

Chen Lei straightened up his clothing and walked into the rear courtyard, where the clan graveyard was located. He had long since dug a grave there for himself, which he slowly climbed down into. At the bottom was a coffin, which he entered. After closing the lid, he took a final breath, and then closed his eyes.

“What a waste of a life,” he thought. He never opened his eyes again.

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1. Chen is a common surname, the same surname as Meng Hao's Elder Brother Chen Fan. Lei means thunder or lightning.

Chapter 1490: Little Mute

In his first life he was a Chosen. In his second life, he reached the pinnacle of the mortal world. His third life ended soaked in blood. His fourth life was, for the most part, a waste.

After dying in the fourth life, his soul flew out, and the fourth of the nine sealing marks glittered radiantly.

The soul entered the cycle of reincarnation, and the fifth life began.

As that happened, Meng Hao's true self was sitting cross-legged on the leaf of the huge flower, waiting for the flower to bloom.

On the Transcendence Path, Yan'er was struggling forward with gritted teeth. She had passed the third tribulation, and was proceeding toward the fourth. She repeated to herself over and over again that she had to keep going. Based on what she had heard from others who had come back from the Transcendence Path throughout the years, she knew... that her Master was in the fifth tribulation.

And she was getting closer and closer to that very location.

"Master, Yan'er is going to find you." The intense focus in her eyes grew stronger. Taking a deep breath, she walked on.

The fifth life began amidst winter snowfall, in a town on the fifth continent. The birth of the child brought no happiness to that family, and was in fact met with silence.

A moment or two later, the young father bitterly walked out of the house... and placed the baby down onto the street.

"It's not that dad and mom don't want you," he murmured, "it's just that you...."

The reason the baby was abandoned was because he was crippled. He was born with only a stump of a tongue, ensuring... that he would never be able to speak. Furthermore, he had a birthmark on his face, making him frighteningly ugly.

The baby's crying grew more and more hoarse as it echoed out into the freezing cold. Eventually, a middle-aged man appeared, wearing a raincoat and a wide, conical hat. When he heard the crying, he walked up to the baby.

Looking down, he sighed, then picked the baby up into his arms and carried him home. The man lived in a small, cold house, within which swirled a permanent aura of death.

Gradually, a frozen corpse became visible, which apparently the man... had performed an autopsy on.

This man was the town coroner.

"Abandoned, can't talk, and ugly as a stray dog. I'll call you Little Mute." The man looked at the baby and smiled. After taking off his hat, it was revealed that he had a long scar running down his entire face, giving him a very vicious appearance. His smile was somewhat frightening, but his eyes were kind.

Little Mute was raised on the gruel provided him by his father the coroner. He grew slowly; apparently the iciness of winter had seeped into his bones, and he was always weak and fearful of the cold. He never seemed to develop fully, and it always as if a strong enough gust of wind came along, he might be carried away with it.

Because his father was a coroner, he had frequent contact with dead bodies. Any time someone in the area was killed, the corpse would be sent to the coroner for examination. Gradually, Little Mute learned the same skills as his father.

"Remember this type of wound, Little Mute. Usually it indicates that the spleen was punctured....."

"See, this one was obviously poisoned."

"Cut the chest open here, Little Mute, and check for tiny white insects. If you see any, make sure not to touch them."

"Look at this fellow, Little Mute. His head and torso have both been slashed open. What kind of power would do that? Not even warriors could

inflict such precise wounds. These injuries were caused by an Immortal. I wonder what he possibly could have done to offend an Immortal.”

At first, Little Mute was afraid. However, thanks to the constant instruction given him, he eventually became quite familiar with examining corpses. By the time he was a teenager, he didn't feel any fear at all, and would sometimes even go behind the coroner's back to do his own autopsies.

The coroner grew older and weaker. Soon, he wasn't taking care of Little Mute, instead, Little Mute was taking care of him.

More years passed, and eventually the coroner had trouble seeing, and could no longer perform the duties of his trade. At his recommendation, Little Mute became the new town coroner.

Little Mute was an adult, but was still physically weak, as though he had never fully grown up. The birthmark on his face grew larger, making him unbearably ugly, and he was as mute as ever. Couple that with the fact that he had frequent contact with corpses, and he developed a somewhat sinister air which ensured that no girl would ever want to marry him.

Little Mute didn't really care about that though. He would be like his father, and live single for all his days.

He went about his coroner's work diligently. It was almost as if he were naturally gifted in those arts. Ten years went by in which he came to be known as the best coroner in the area, and was often called out to other towns for consultations.

The old coroner continued to decline. He had no wife to accompany him, only Little Mute. He would often jabber garrulously, whereupon Little Mute would listen quietly and smile.

Although he couldn't speak, he was able to make some signs with his hands, allowing him to communicate to some degree.

Years passed, and Little Mute became so well-known as a coroner that he came to be frequently summoned to the capital city. The old coroner eventually died. He passed away peacefully, and in no pain. Little Mute

wept.

After burying the old man and paying respects, Little Mute left the town and moved to the capital city.

Year after year passed. Before long, Little Mute was fifty years of age, and was famous throughout the empire. A mere look at any corpse, and he could determine all the details about the cause of death. He could even perform such wonders with skeletons that had been dead for many years.

His understanding of corpses eventually reached an indescribable level, and he came to be known as the empire's Grandmaster Coroner.

However, coroners were still coroners, and would always be considered lowly. Despite reaching the pinnacle of his field, it was a position that commanded true respect only from others in that same field.

And yet, Little Mute wasn't resentful or dissatisfied. He knew that he was nothing more than a mute, incapable of speech. In his later years, he returned to his hometown and began to write a book.

He compiled all his knowledge about corpses, all of his experiences and judgements, into one prolific work. One year, winter came, and as he was looking out of the window at the snow, he thought about a story the old coroner had often told.

He had described finding Little Mute in the street one year as a baby, in the middle of winter.

Little Mute sat there quietly, thinking, and his eyes gradually turned blank. He didn't have much life left in him, and was still as afraid of the cold as he had always been. He suddenly felt as if his life had no warmth in it at all, as if he were like a corpse.

He knew that he wouldn't be able to last for much longer. One night, he walked out of his house and, facing the gusts of snowy wind that blew against his face, returned to the spot where the coroner said he had found him.

Looking down at the ground, he sighed softly, then laid down and looked up into the sky. He let the cold embrace him. He allowed the snow to fall

onto his face. It didn't melt.

Gradually, a smile appeared on his face, a smile that would never fade....

He went as he had come. In his entire life, he never spoke a single word....

His fifth life ended. It was a bit dull when compared to his fourth life. He had none of the glory he had experienced in his first life, none of the vast power of his second. There was no bloodshed like his third life. If anything, his fifth life had been one of mediocrity.

The only thing he had possessed was peace and quiet, as well as mastery of his field of work.

His soul rose up and seemed to merge into the wind and snow. At the same time, the fifth sealing mark began to shine brightly.

Yet again he was reincarnated, and his sixth life began.

About that same time, Yan'er was trembling as she walked along the Transcendence Path. The mastiff had been with her for the hundreds of years she had been walking along, and by this point, she was reaching the end of the fourth tribulation.

Her cultivation base had risen continuously along her journey, and her enlightenment had grown. She was now at the level of a Dao Lord. The fourth tribulation had been very difficult.

One step after another, she proceeded along, drawing ever closer to the fifth tribulation.

Eventually she reached the border, and her eyes began to shine brightly. At long last, she was able to lay eyes on her Master....

There he was, a corpse sitting in meditation, as he had sat for hundreds of years....

He was covered in dust, but his facial features were clearly distinguishable. Everything about him caused Yan'er's heart to tremble. She quietly dropped to her knees and kowtowed.

"Master," she said hoarsely, her cheeks wet with tears. Despite the

hundreds of years which had passed, her memories of her Master were as clear as ever.

She would never forget. Could never forget.

This was her focus. Her obsession. It was why she had climbed the Vast Expanse Shrine and walked the Transcendence Path. The reason for everything was her master. She wanted to see for herself whether or not he had truly perished.

As of this moment, she could look at his corpse, but could not approach it. If she took even a step into the fifth tribulation, she would be destroyed in all aspects. She could only stand there, one step away from him, weeping. After a long moment though, her eyes began to shine with a strange light.

“Wait a second....” A tremor ran through her as she looked at Meng Hao’s forehead. After a moment passed, she gritted her teeth and extended her right hand toward his face.

To do that, she had to reach into the fifth tribulation. Pressure exploded onto her arm, which instantly began to transform into a blood mist. However, in the very moment before that happened, she managed to touch his forehead.

Rumbling could be heard as Yan’er coughed up a mouthful of blood. She staggered back, her right arm half destroyed. And yet, she didn’t care about that. In that brief moment, she had discovered a secret which no other person would have noticed.

“Master’s forehead opened up. This is the Dao of Reincarnation. That magic... was something he passed on to me. His soul... didn’t naturally disperse. Other people might think that, but not me. I’m his apprentice, and from what I can sense, Master... isn’t dead!

“But if he didn’t die, then why did his soul fire go out...? Unless....” Yan’er was not the young girl she had been so long ago. She was intelligent to begin with, and because of her understanding of Meng Hao, she had already guessed the truth. However, she didn’t want to accept it.

After a long moment, her eyes began to glow, and she began to breathe heavily. The focus in her eyes grew more intense.

“Master... even if you are in the cycle of reincarnation, then I will journey among the masses to find you....” With that, she rose to her feet. By means of medicinal pills, she regrew her right arm, then took a deep breath and gave Meng Hao’s corpse a final, long look. Then, she and the mastiff turned and headed back toward the entrance of the Transcendence Path. Her destination: the nine continents of Planet Vast Expanse, where she would search for her Master.

She understood how the Dao of Reincarnation worked, and from the clues present, she was sure that her master was currently somewhere on Planet Vast Expanse.

Chapter 1491: Xu Liuyun [1]

During the last snowfall of winter on the fourth continent, the curtain opened on the sixth life of Meng Hao's clone.

He was born into the prosperous Xu Clan, which owned lots of land and property in the region, and controlled numerous profitable businesses. Most of their income came from agricultural interests.

They lived in one of the large cities in the empire of the mortal world, which was situated next to a trade canal. They were fabulously wealthy.

A child born into a clan like that was destined to live a life free from adversity, and to always have everything he needed and wanted.

Thankfully, in this life, Meng Hao's clone was not a silkpants like he was in his fourth life. He grew up into an intelligent young man who was quite prominent even as a youth. Soon, he began to assist his father in managing the family companies.

As time passed, and he grew older, he came to be in charge of all of the family's business interests. He ran things well, but at the same time, began to develop a certain ferocity. It was a fierceness manifested, not toward his fellow clan members, but toward his business opponents.

He excelled at hostile takeovers, and soon all of the other businesses in the entire city had been swallowed up by his clan. Of course, an accomplishment like that couldn't be made without a bit of killing. Soon, the hands of the clone's sixth life came to be stained with blood.

Such methods were contrary to how his father preferred to do things, and in fact, went against the entire clan. However, he didn't take such matters very seriously. He did things how he wanted to, and by the age of thirty, the Xu Clan had come to be the richest in the area!

Eventually, he came to realize that he should support the scholars and intellectuals among his clan, so he founded a college. As time passed, his support of the scholar class allowed him to influence the imperial court.

Soon, his plotting extended his network to encompass even the warrior

class in the empire.

He married, but felt no attachment to his wife. It had been done as a form of business alliance, with the hope of sending the clan's influence soaring to an even higher level.

And that was exactly what it did. By the time he was forty, the clan businesses were the most successful in all the lands. Over time, he expanded into many types of trade, and yet in the end, their foundation was always agriculture.

Under his leadership, the clan moved to the Imperial City, where they became the official Imperial merchants.

As the Imperial merchants, it was impossible for anyone to compete with them in terms of profits. Of course, in addition to the material benefits, there were other advantages to their new status.

By the age of forty-five, Xu Liuyun had reached the absolute pinnacle of his life. Numerous clan members had become officials within the current dynasty, and many of the scholars he had supported were now members of the government.

His entire clan had soared to incredible heights. Most people would likely be content to just enjoy the fruits of such labor. At first, he felt a bit confused about what to do next, but then, he realized that a storm was brewing.

That storm came in the form of a famine that had just taken grip on the land.

That winter, Xu Liuyun stood in a courtyard in the clan estates, looking at the snow falling out of the sky. Behind him were a few dozen members of the clan, standing there silently. Some of them were members of the Imperial court, some controlled powerful businesses within the Imperial City, and others were direct bloodline descendants of the clan who had been sent out to control other interests in other parts of the empire. There were even some powerful warriors present.

These were the people who controlled the power in the clan, and

although it couldn't be said that their reach stretched throughout the entire empire, they weren't very far off from that.

Any one of them could be considered extremely prominent. And yet, as they looked at the man standing in front of them, their hearts were filled with reverence and awe. He was a man who, in the space of a few dozen years, had created an incredible storm of events.

Although he wasn't well-acclaimed in the Imperial court, and was even looked down upon by the emperor, the prime minister, and many others, the important members of the clan all knew... the terrifying power he wielded when it came to wealth and profit.

After a long moment passed, the sixth life of Meng Hao's clone, the man known to all as Xu Liuyun, finally spoke.

"This is an opportunity," he said. "Perhaps the Xu Clan can take the next step, and actually come to control the entire empire. Of course, there is also the possibility... that we will be wiped out." After another long moment, his eyes glittered with ferocity.

"Execute the operation!"

As soon as the words left his mouth, all of the Xu Clan's power, both within and without the Imperial City, was focused on one task. And that was... barricading off all of their farmlands from the public, in the middle of the famine!

It was a concept that, from the very beginning, seemed soaked in blood. Barricading farmlands in the middle of a famine carried the implication of driving up the price of grain goods to exorbitant levels, to the point where many people would be forced to sell their own properties to pay for food.

It would likely lead to many deaths because of starvation. Families and clans would be destroyed. However, among the ranks of the noble clans, the Xu Clan would have an incredible opportunity.

In order to carry out the plan, the Xu Clan used all of the wealth it had accumulated over the past decades. They plotted, created alliances, and killed enemies. In the end, several months after the famine ended... they

controlled so much land that their power within the empire was almost without rival.

They had their own private army, and vast swaths of land, bought and paid for with blood.

By paying out numerous gifts, they managed to appease the noble class. The complicated scheming required caused more than a few gray hairs to appear on Xu Liuyun's head, and yet his mind never ceased to plan and plot.

The peace that followed lasted for fifteen years, during which time Xu Liuyun didn't make much of a stir. That made people less suspicious of him, and gave him a chance to quietly expand the interests of the clan.

One year, when he was sixty, he once again stood in a courtyard watching the snow fall. Behind him, hundreds of clan members stood quietly. Anyone who knew the identities and statuses of these people would be shocked; they were people who could shake the entire empire.

"This is an opportunity...." Xu Liuyun said, his voice hoarse. These were the same words he had spoken fifteen years ago. After a long moment, he nodded.

The nod of his head sparked a war of succession. Ten years passed by in a flash. The successor he had backed in the war became the emperor, and married a daughter of the Xu Clan. The young emperor even viewed Xu Liuyun as his foster father.

Virtually the entire Imperial court was loyal to him, even the prime minister. His word carried more weight with the army than an Imperial edict.

By this point, he had just as much power as he had had in his second life. Although it wasn't as obvious as it had been during that life, since he now operated in secret, his cold, calculating eyes could look down on the entire empire.

During this life, he had been heartless and unethical. He had no children, and yet, at the age of seventy, there was not a single person who

dared speak to him without subconsciously bowing their heads.

Five more years passed, and his body began to decline. Eventually, he lapsed into a coma. Chaos was fermenting in the clan, and there were certain members who were itching to fight for control.

A year later, during the winter, he awoke from the coma. An old servant supported him with his arm as he stood in a courtyard, watching the snow fall. This was the third time in his life that he had been faced with an important decision.

“After I die, the clan will be thrown into unrest. After it passes... there may not be a Xu Clan in the empire any more.” He knew that the reason for all of that was because he had no male heir.

“The only option is... to take control of the empire. Use the power of the empire to quell the clan turmoil. That way, any chaos will exist, not just in the Xu Clan, but in the empire as a whole. The result will still be favorable for in the end, though. As for the Xu Clan, it won't matter who gains control, at least the clan will continue on.”

Xu Liuyun, the sixth life of Meng Hao's clone, stood there silently. This time, he spent much more time deliberating than he had on the previous two occasions. A long, long time passed. Finally, he sighed, thinking about all of the blood that had been spilt to carry out his first plan, and acquire all of that land.

In the end, he chose not to attempt to overthrow the empire. Looking older than he ever had, he gazed at the falling snow, the final snowfall of winter, and closed his eyes. Gradually, his aura faded away.

The day after he died, the Xu Clan was thrown into chaos, and that chaos caused the entire empire to be shaken. Soon, the emperor intervened. Over the course of the following months, virtually the entire clan was slaughtered.

Eventually the emperor, who was now a middle-aged man, received a message that the final remaining members of the Xu Clan had returned to the city they had come from, by the canal. They were back in their original ancestral mansion. The glory they had built up over the past hundred

years was like a flower in a mirror, or the moon reflected on the waters of a lake.

This was Meng Hao's sixth life.... His arrival rocketed the Xu Clan up to the pinnacle of grandeur, and upon his departure, he took that grandeur with him. It was as if time had flowed in reverse, returning the Xu Clan to its original state.

When his sixth life ended, the sixth sealing mark was complete. Meng Hao's clone entered reincarnation and began his seventh life.

During those hundred years, Yan'er traveled among the continents, visiting the mortal worlds, searching for the aura of her Master.

She was completely and utterly convinced that she would be able to find his reincarnation.

If she couldn't find him in one life, she would look for him the life after that, and the one after that... until she found him.

Meng Hao's true self was still sitting cross-legged on the flower out in the starry sky of the Vast Expanse, meditating as he waited for the flower to bloom.

The flower bud appeared to be just on the verge of opening up.

As for the Sect Leader and the other top experts of the Vast Expanse School, they were once again back in the necropolis, intent on opening the way to the ninth land mass. Although they weren't completely confident, they had to try. If they failed, they would try again, and again after that. They were focused and filled with anticipation as they began their journey.

At the same time, the Ninth Sect continued to expand, growing larger and larger. By this point, their forces were vast, and included numerous powerful experts. They subdued one Realm and world after another.

That was when Meng Hao's seventh life began on the third continent.

1. This surname Xu is the same as Xu Qing's surname. Liu means "to leave behind" and yun means "cloud".

Chapter 1492: Mutt

The third continent on Planet Vast Expanse was unique among the other continents because it never had winter. All the seasons there were like spring. And yet, on this particular year, it snowed.

That snow didn't fall on the entirety of the continent, but specifically on one of the deserts there. Along with the snowfall, a child was born into the world.

This was the seventh life of Meng Hao's clone, and he was born into a very poor family who owned nothing more than a camel and a mutt dog. His father was a desert guide.

On the day the child was born, the dog froze to death, and therefore the father insisted on giving his son the name... Mutt.

Mutt was not born lucky. When he was three years old, his father was bitten by a viper while guiding a caravan through the desert. Although he made it back home, he died shortly thereafter.

His mother didn't seem to care much about her husband's death. After she buried him, she cared for Mutt for another five years. When he was eight years old, she ran off with a passing merchant.

On her way out the door, she told Mutt that his father had once been a bandit. Acting as a guide, he had led her family into the desert, where killed all of them except for her. Then forced her to marry him.

For her entire life after that, she had always looked forward to his death.

Mutt watched quietly as his mother made her way off into the distance. He lived alone after that. One day, an old man appeared who offered to take him to a place where there was food to eat. Mutt didn't hesitate; he immediately left with the old man.

He had been under the assumption that they would leave the desert, but contrary to his expectations, the old man simply took him to another location in the same desert. There, he was thrown into a hell on earth.

He was one of a whole group of children of the same age, all of whom

received extensive daily training. They were being molded into... assassins!

In the years that followed, Mutt saw many people die. Some were killed by others, some he killed himself. Some died during the training process.

If you wanted to live, you had to be ruthless. If you wanted to live, you had to kill.

Mutt wanted to live, so he was ruthless, and he killed. He trusted no one, and as such, had no friends. The only thing which existed between him and those around him was hostility, and the ferocity of the fighting.

Every year, a new group of children would be brought in. Every year, a vast quantity of corpses would be buried.

Mutt grew numb to it all. At a certain point, the other children came to fear him. Even some of the adults looked at him in the same way.

"Maybe I'm ugly," he thought one day, running his fingers across his face. He was only sixteen, but his face was already crisscrossed with scars, making him look very sinister. In his second year in this place, one of the older men had tried to force him into performing a revolting act, and when he refused, the man slashed up his face.

Two years later, Mutt cut that man's head off.

Mutt rubbed the side of his head, where his ear should be. He had lost his ear during a round of training in which only one person could come out alive in the end. His opponent had torn off his ear, but he had ripped his opponent's throat open.

Mutt's expression was cold as he looked at his throat in the mirror, which also had a vicious-looking scar on it.

In fact, his entire body was covered with scars, but he didn't care.

When he was seventeen, the old man who had brought him to this place took him away, along with two other boys and a girl. All three of them were people like Mutt, who had slaughtered countless opponents throughout the course of their training.

The four of them were taken to another training ground, where there

were other youngsters their same age. The same monotonous existence ensued. Three years later, when Mutt was twenty, he participated in his final trial by fire. He beheaded a hundred opponents, causing everyone to look at him with fear. Even the old man who had taken him all those years ago had the same look in his eye.

Mutt didn't care. He just stood there quietly.

The following months were the happiest he had ever experienced. He was sent to learn etiquette, and was also treated by a doctor, who used strange medicinal plants to remove the scars from his body.

Although his ear couldn't be replaced, the miraculous medicines changed his appearance so much that he now looked like a handsome young man.

From then on, he was sent near and far throughout the continent on assassination missions. At the direction of the old man, he killed countless targets, including men and women, young and old.

He cut down people of all types, and never asked questions about them. He killed quickly and efficiently. However, he had a particular aversion to seeing victims who had a right ear. Every mission that he accomplished, he would slice off the right ear of the target.

Time passed. Ten years later, he had lost track of how many people he had killed. However, word had begun to spread; he now had a new name in addition to 'Mutt'.

He was called Ear-Slicer. 1

It was a macabre name.

He had always assumed his life would go on in the same way forever. But two years later, after he finished yet another mission, he was walking through a town and saw an old woman, a beggar. Her eyes had been dug out, her tongue cut off, her legs broken.

As Mutt stood in front of her, he smelled a noxious odor. He looked down and could see that her legs were putrefying, and had been broken so many times that the bones would never heal properly.

For many years, not a single emotion could be seen on his face, but now, his expression flickered. He looked at the woman somewhat blankly, and shivered.

This was the first time that, not only did he not return to the headquarters after the mission, he also killed someone other than his target.

He slaughtered many people in that town. Anyone who had threatened or harmed that old beggar woman ended up having their throats slit by Mutt, and their ears cut off.

There was one rich household in the town who was said to have once been a family of traveling merchants, and were thus particularly at fault. He exterminated the entire family. In the end, he took the old woman away with him.

The event caused a huge stir in the entire country. Numerous constables and inspectors closed in on the area, and the assassin's guild also sent people to try to silence him in death.

The following years were spent on the run, in exhaustion. He killed many people, and found himself in many dangerous situations.

Eventually, the old woman died. She wasn't killed; she simply succumbed to her previous injuries.

In all the years she was with Mutt leading up to her death, she never knew the identity of the person caring for her. After she died, he wrote a few words on her gravestone.

My mother.

– Mutt

He stood quietly in front of her grave for a long time. As he did, people began to appear nearby. They were familiar faces, each one being an assassin from the guild.

None of them spoke. After a long moment, their killing intent exploded out, and they began to converge on Mutt. He looked up, and began to fight

like a wild dog.

One enemy after another fell. In the end, he was the only one left standing. To him, these opponents were simply too weak. Shaking his head, he cut off their ears and then left. He ended up traveling to a place where he assumed nobody would go looking for him, the desert. He was tired of killing people, and wanted to live alone in peace. Eventually, he took up the same line of work as his father, and began to guide people through the desert.

Years passed, an entire decade. One day he awoke to find his house surrounded. When he walked out the door, he found himself facing a group of assassins led by the same old man from years ago. He stood there looking at Mutt, legs trembling from the ravages of age.

After a long moment, the old man spoke out in a soft voice. "Kill him."

A spectacular slaughter ensued. Corpses fell left and right, and wounds opened up all over Mutt's body. He didn't care, though. After killing all of his opponents, he sighed and walked up to the old man. The old man looked on in bitter silence at the man who he himself had brought into the guild as a boy, seemingly waiting for him to say something.

Instead, a blade flashed.

Mutt frowned as he looked around at all the bodies. He left, going to the first training facility in the desert, then the second, and finally to the guild headquarters.

He had no idea how many people he killed. It was like back in the old days when you either killed or were killed.

After slaughtering everyone in the assassin's guild, he felt very tired. He returned to the desert, where he once again began to work as a guide. A year passed. Then another, and another. Eventually he lost track of time. One day he realized that he was an old man, and his body was very weak. There he was, was looking out at the desert, absent-mindedly feeling the right side of his head where his ear should be. Snowflakes began to flutter down from the sky, and at the same time, a beam of light appeared off in the distance. Within that beam of light was a woman.

The snow fell, and Mutt's eye slowly closed.

Thus ended his seventh life. As his soul flew out to once again enter reincarnation, the woman flew toward his body at breakneck speed.

She was beautiful, and when she finally reached Mutt's corpse, she could sense the power of reincarnation. Tears began to stream down her face.

"Master...." It was Yan'er. She had searched for years and years before coming to this place and sensing familiar fluctuations. However, she had been just a bit too late.

She knew that her Master was already in the cycle of reincarnation.

After a long moment of silence, she buried Mutt's corpse. Then she turned, her eyes flickering with determination as she began to follow the already fading aura of reincarnation.

She was convinced that... she was getting closer and closer to finding her Master.

That year, Meng Hao's clone completed the seventh sealing mark. Then, his eighth life began, on the second continent. With every reincarnation, the branches of the Immortal Root would shine even more dazzlingly than before. However, his memories came to be sealed even deeper. It was really as if he were experiencing a brand new life each time.

*

1. Two interesting things. First is that in Chinese "Ear-Slicer" sounds very similar to "Mutt." You might even say they rhyme. Second, Er Gen's name literally means "ear"...

Chapter 1493: Wait Until I Grow Up....

Meng Hao's clone began his eighth life on the second continent.

Apparently, he really did have some special connection to snow. Each of his lives began in the snow, and this life was no exception. In the final snowfall of winter on the second continent, a baby was born into a mountain stronghold. His crying upon birth was loud and clear.

His father was a mountain bandit, the second in charge of the stronghold. As for the leader of the bandits... it was his mother.

The first time that seven-year-old Li Hao ever yelled at his parents, he cried: "I want to be a bandit too!"

In response, his mother spanked him for three days straight.

He had an older brother who was also an excellent bandit, and was quite renowned within the stronghold. His brother eventually won the approval of his parents, and was named the Young Lord of the stronghold.

As Li Hao grew up, his parents continuously presented him with servant girls to keep him company. Gradually, he came to understand what his mission in life was. He needed to provide grandchildren to his parents, to ensure that the offspring of the Li Clan would forever exist in Heaven and Earth.

It was a glorious mission, but also came with a lot of pressure. And yet... that was how his parents raised him. Every time he accomplished one of his missions, he could see how envious his older brother was.

His mission, and the looks given him by his brother, left Li Hao feeling very pleased. The harder he worked at it, the more his goal in life changed from that which he had stated at seven years of age.

"I don't want to be a bandit. I'm going to make sure that the offspring of the Li Clan fill the entire empire! In a hundred years, the Li Clan is going to be one of the biggest parts of empire!"

"In a hundred years, everyone in the Empire is going to feel like they're related!"

His declaration stunned his parents and left his older brother shaken. In fact, everyone in the entire stronghold was completely astonished.

Li Hao quite enjoyed the expressions on their faces, and came to view his mission as extremely important. From that day on, he began to work whole-heartedly. He began to do a lot of research, and closely studied certain popular, illustrated reading materials....

His own physical training, combined with the efforts of the servant girls, ensured that his skills only continued to become more refined. By the time he was twenty years old, he had already sired 59 children.

At that point, he stood at the peak of the mountain, looking up into the Heavens, tears of pride streaming down his face.

He felt like he was a roc, a roc who was being held back by being cooped up in the mountain stronghold. In order to accomplish the mission he had originally set out to accomplish, he chose to leave the stronghold and travel the lands.

His parents thought it was a crazy idea, and his brother... actually looked at him with fear. However, he didn't care about any of that. In his mind, his family just didn't understand his mission in life.

"You people just don't get it. One person... can change the world. Of course, the condition is that he has to be a man. A strapping, energetic man. And that man is none other than me... Li Hao!"

That night, he left the stronghold. Wrapped up in his ideals, he climbed down the mountain, and made his way out into the world. Experiencing the wide world really opened his eyes, and he felt as if his mission were more important than ever. In fact, he felt that every day that passed was a wasted opportunity.

He started in a village near the foot of the mountain. Thankfully, he was handsome, and had a very charming pair of eyes, allowing him to successfully accomplish his mission in the village.

How could he ever have imagined, though, that fully accomplishing his mission would be so difficult? Twenty years passed. He was now forty, and

had encountered numerous difficulties. People had even tried to kill him. It was with great difficulty that he managed to sire 107 children.

Feeling just as energetic as ever, he decided to leave the village and go to... the next village.

"It's fine," he told himself. "Villages are small, but my dreams are big." In the second village, he used every method at his disposal, spending all of the wealth he had accumulated in the past twenty years to get him through yet another twenty years. By that time, he had sired his 178th child in the second village.

He was moved to tears by that fact, and yet, despite being sixty years old, gritted his teeth and took all of his grown children, and even the grandchildren, in a campaign to even more distant lands.

The first destination... was the third village in this mountain range, almost ten kilometers away.

Li Hao was feeling more pleased with himself this time. He had been indoctrinating his children and grandchildren with his ideals. After all, he had long since come to the conclusion that he wouldn't be able to accomplish his mission on his own. However, with their help, he would surely be able to reach the glorious heights which he sought.

He and his sons and grandsons only spent three years in the third village before they occupied its entirety. It was then that Li Hao could laugh heartily and, instead of traveling out himself, send his sons and grandsons out into the rest of the country.

One after another, his sons and grandsons carried out his ideals, and his mission, out from the village into other locations. Ten years passed. Every year, another one of his descendents would grow up, and would be sent out.

After another ten years passed, Li Hao was more than eighty years old, and his descendants could be found in every business and vocation throughout the empire. As for exactly how many descendants he had, not even he knew. However, in his mind, tens of thousands was good enough.

He was happy with his life, and yet he continued to live for another fifteen years. When he was one hundred years old, the clan that Li Hao had founded had reached a shocking size. There were hundreds of thousands of members, and if they all joined together at the same time, they could count as a small country.

At the moment, they were spread throughout all of the lands, but that made it all the more terrifying.

Although he was a bit lonely in his old age, when the snow began to fall one winter, and his life came to an end, he was content and proud.

"I lived an extraordinary life, and I changed the future of an empire, of the world even. I alone... changed everything." Li Hao laughed three times, and then closed his eyes and passed away.

Meng Hao's true self was aware of all of this, and would most definitely have gone back to Planet Vast Expanse to stop it from happening, were he not stuck next to the flower.

He could never have imagined that after seven relatively normal lives, his clone's eighth life would have been spent doing something so absurd. Thankfully, the bodies left behind by his clones after reincarnation had no connection to Meng Hao himself.

Bodies did not reincarnate, only souls.

After the conclusion of the absurd eighth life, the memories were sealed, and the clone began his ninth life on the first continent. Meng Hao's true self was a bit worried about what would happen in this final life.

After a bit of contemplation, he decided not to interfere. He could sense that the clone's final life was just beginning to unfold. However, it was in that moment that his expression suddenly flickered, and he shot to his feet in surprise.

He had just sensed that the ninth life was completely different from the second through eighth lives. Those lives had been experienced by the soul passing through reincarnation. The bodies had not been Meng Hao's, only the souls.

However, as the ninth life began, Meng Hao could sense that this ninth life was exactly the same as the clone's first life. Unexpectedly... this life was somehow made from Meng Hao's own blood. Instead of saying that this was his clone's ninth life, it would be more appropriate to say that it was his actual clone!

The soul was his, and the blood was his. This was something completely different from before. Apparently, after his clone's body passed away into meditation on the Transcendence Path and his soul went through years upon years of reincarnation, his original body was somehow reconstituted in this ninth life. This was similar to how the infant Fang Mu that had floated down the river, formed from Meng Hao himself, was actually the same person as Meng Hao.

Meng Hao was both shocked and nervous because of this development.

However, that mere fact alone was not what left him most shaken. The biggest twist was that this clone's ninth life felt different from anything that had happened before. He could barely sense its existence, as though the connection between the two of them was extremely faint. Meng Hao's true self couldn't see exactly what events were playing out in the clone's ninth life.

"The ninth life is the most important, the most critical. That must be the explanation for this strange development..." Having reached this understanding, he didn't feel much better. He was just about to head back toward the Vast Expanse School, when suddenly, the enormous flower began to bloom!

As it did, the aura of the final copper mirror shard began to spread out. Meng Hao's true self took a deep breath.

"I won't interfere with the clone. I'll let things play out as normal. Perhaps interfering would lead to negative consequences. Plus, if I don't get this copper mirror shard right now, then who knows how much longer I'll have to wait." With that, his eyes flickered with augury calculations. Without any further hesitation, he flickered into motion, heading into the enormous flower.

So far, he hadn't interfered at all in his clone's lives, and therefore, he would do the same for the final life; he would remain completely hands-off!

Meanwhile, in the first continent, in the capital city....

The capital city was large, and had a sizeable population, but was located in a relatively remote region. Snow fell and the wind blew as a husband and wife emerged from a temple after having prayed to be blessed with a child.

They had been married for many years, but had never conceived any children. Over the years, they had come to the temple on a few occasions to piously pray for offspring. They were starting to reach their later years, and were getting anxious about the matter. They had even consulted doctors about the situation, but no solution had been provided.

After leaving the temple, they headed back home, stewing in their anxiety. However, as they were walking along, they were surprised to hear the sound of a baby crying. Looking over, they saw an infant lying on the ground at the foot of a wall.

They quickly picked the baby up and looked around, but saw no one. Their hearts went out to the child, but after looking at him more closely, they realized the truth. Someone had abandoned the child in embarrassment because he had been born blind.

After a bit of thought, they decided to take the baby home with them. To them, this child was like a gift from the Heavens.

The boy would never see the light of day; he would live in a world of darkness. And yet, they chose to become his parents. They gave him the name Little Treasure, and began to raise him in an environment of warmth and love.

Little Treasure didn't realize that he was different from everyone else. He thought... that the world was simply black.

He thought that everyone was like him. He didn't even understand... what eyes were.

The Heavens had taken away his vision, had prevented him from seeing the world. However, he had been blessed with nimble hands, and a quiet, clever personality.

His parents loved him dearly from the very beginning. They held him when he walked, even until he was four or five years old.

His life was happy, and in fact, he thought that he must be the happiest person in the world.

When he felt the warmth of the sun on his face, he would ask, “Dad, mom! What’s so warm?”

“That’s sunlight from the sun.”

“The sun?”

“It’s a huge ball of fire up in the sky....”

“Can I touch it? How did you find out about it?”

“... Little Treasure, you... the Heavens have their eyes closed, so you can’t see. Just wait... wait until you grow up, then you’ll be able to see.”

When he heard the birds singing, he would ask, “What’s that sound?”

“A bird.”

“Mom, what do birds look like?”

“They have wings, so they can fly in the sky....”

“Oh, okay. Once I grow up, I’ll be able to see them, right? When you were kids, you couldn’t see anything either, right mom, right dad? I get it.”

To hear such words from his little mouth caused stabs of pain to fill his parents’ hearts. They would hug him, and would cry silently.

The child was unaware of their pain. He was as happy as ever, blessed even. Furthermore, he held a keen anticipation for being able to eventually grow up.

One day he heard some neighbor kids making fun of him for being blind, although he didn’t know what the word meant.

That night, when his mom was rocking him to sleep, he asked, “Mom, what does it mean to be blind?”

Suddenly, he felt his mother shiver, and could sense that she had begun crying. He reached up and gently wiped the tears away.

“Don’t cry, mom...” he said softly. “I won’t ask that question ever again.” And for the rest of his life, he never did.

Chapter 1494: Little Treasure

Starting the next day, he was much quieter. When he felt something warm on his face, he wouldn't ask what the sun was. When he heard something singing, he wouldn't ask what birds were.

Eventually, he heard enough from other people to understand what it meant to be blind. He learned that the sky wasn't black, it was blue. The world wasn't black either. It was filled with many colors.

He also realized that he was different from the other children. They had all been able to see the world from the moment they were born, whereas he....

He thought about what his parents had told him, that he would be able to see the world after he grew up. That was a lie. And yet, he didn't want to believe that it was a lie, and continued to tell himself that after he grew up, he would be able to see.

The reason he couldn't see... was that he hadn't grown up yet.

He began to grow more reclusive. He didn't want to go out and play with the other children, mostly because they always bullied him. They made fun of him for not being able to see, joked about him being blind. But inside, he wanted to have friends, so he did his best to simply smile, and not cry. When he did play with the other children, and got shoved to the ground, tearing his clothes and scraping his skin until it bled, he just smiled.

People made jokes about him being blind, and those jokes only continued to become more and more cruel. He felt so bad that he wanted to weep, but he held it in. He didn't want to harm the friendships he had. He needed those friends.

One day, he got very excited when the other children, whom he could hear but not see, suddenly came looking for him. They said they wanted him to play a special game with them.

"It's called blind man's bluff. Little Treasure, you're blind, so you have to

chase us, okay!?”

“Whoever you grab, that person will become blind. Oh right, we’re going to go to a special place to play. Just wait until we say go, then you can start chasing us.”

“Um... I don’t want to play,” Little Treasure said, trembling inwardly. He knew that being blind was a terrible thing, and didn’t want to make other people become blind.

“Shut up! If you don’t play with us right now, then we’ll never play with you ever again!” Refusing to discuss the matter any further, the children dragged him out to play. He wasn’t sure where exactly they were taking him, but eventually he heard birds singing. Eventually they shoved him into a kneeling position.

“Remember, don’t start chasing us until we say go.” They started laughing, the sound of which eventually began to fade off into the distance.

He knelt there on the ground, not moving, worried that he would break the rules and start moving too soon. If that happened, maybe they wouldn’t want to play with him again. So he waited... for a very, very long time.

Soon the singing of the birds faded away, and he started to get cold and scared.

“Can we start now?” he cried out. But no one answered.

“Can we start now?” He shivered. It was getting colder, and yet no one responded to his cries.

“Can we start now...?” He slowly rose to his feet, trembling. He thought he could hear the sound of people nearby, but no one answered his question.

He was scared. The world was pitch black, and the warmth that he normally felt because of his parents was gone. Now, the world was not only black, it was freezing cold.

“Can we start now...? I... I don’t want to play any more....” He was so frightened that tears began to roll down his cheeks.

“Where are you guys? I don’t want to play anymore.... I want to go home.

“Dad? Mom? Where are you...?” Weeping, he began to walk forward, flailing his arms in front of him, but grabbing ahold of nothing but air. After a few steps, he fell.

“Mother... where are you...? I’m scared....” He struggled back to his feet, weeping in fear. The feeling of being completely alone was stifling. His garments were torn. His head was bleeding. And he was only seven years old. Stretching his hands out in front of him, he began to walk forward slowly.

What he couldn’t see that he was currently in a forest, and that up ahead of him was a lone wolf. It was slowly approaching him, staring at him with cold, merciless eyes.

Just when the wolf was about to pounce on him, it suddenly shivered, then sagged in place. A moment later, it had transformed into nothing more than ash. A young woman appeared, wearing a long green garment.

She stared at the child, somewhat in a daze, watching as he groped his way along. She saw the tears on his face, and could hear him crying out in that heartbreaking voice. The young woman bit her lip, and began to cry.

“Master....” she murmured. This was Yan’er. She had been searching for her Master for hundreds of years, and on this day, she had managed to track the faint traces of the Dao of Reincarnation to this very place. At long last... she had found the reincarnation of her Master.

The weeping boy’s foot caught on something, and he began to fall forward, but Yan’er gently caught him in her arms.

Little Treasure shivered and reached out to feel who it was that had caught him. She felt warm, almost like his mother. There was something very familiar about her. She even smelled familiar.

“You....” he whispered.

After a moment, Yan'er knelt down in front of him, smiled, and asked, "Your name is Little Treasure, right?"

"Yes," he replied, nodding. The woman's voice was gentle, and suddenly, he wasn't afraid any more.

It was at that point that voices could be heard off in the distance. Apparently, a large group of people were walking along and calling out sporadically.

"Little Treasure, where are you...?"

"Little Treasure... it's me, mom. Where are you...?"

"Little Treasure...." It was his mother and father, along with other people. They sounded anxious, even fearful, as they called out to him.

"Dad.... Mom...." Little Treasure trembled.

Yan'er hesitated for a moment, then chose not to take the boy away. Instead, she reached out and tousled his hair.

"Your mom and dad found you," she said softly. "I'll... see you later."

She took a step back to leave, but Little Treasure suddenly felt as if he were about to lose something important.

"Big Sis..." he blurted, "May I... may I touch your face?"

Yan'er's eyes glowed with a kind warmth as she looked at the boy. This was her Master, who meant everything to her.

She knelt back down in front of the boy. His hands were smudged with dirt, but she didn't care. He reached out and ran his fingers slowly and carefully across her face, and after a long moment, he smiled. Yan'er looked at him one more time. Then, smiling, she turned and left.

Moments later, Little Treasure called out to his parents, who rushed over, weeping, and scooped him up into their arms. After leaving the forest, he never asked about what had happened. However, in the following days, he refused to play with the other children. He preferred to be alone, where he would think back to the woman he had met in the forest.

Sometimes, he felt as if she hadn't actually left, but was next to him, watching over him. Although she never revealed herself to him, he always had that feeling.

Time passed. Ten years went by, and Little Treasure had grown up. However, he still lived in a world of darkness, devoid of any light. It was as if the Heavens had forgotten all about him.

His parents had grown old, although he couldn't see that. And yet, he could tell that their voices had become different. Because of his nimble hands, he began to learn the same carpentry skills as his parents.

Since he rarely had anything important to do, he took up sculpture as a hobby. Although he couldn't see, he could imagine, and as such, he carved sculptures that were incredibly vivid and full of life. They were like the dreams of a child.

He carved birds, and houses, and the people closest to him.

He didn't care that people called him blind. He didn't care that he couldn't see the world. In his heart, he had come to find his place in Heaven and Earth. His wooden sculptures. They were everything to him.

Although the sculptures didn't always resemble reality, they were what he saw in his heart. Furthermore, if he was able to feel something with his hands, then he would be able to reproduce it perfectly in sculpture form.

"Mother once said that the Heavens had closed their eyes. I want to sculpt Heavens with eyes wide open. Something that only I can feel." Little Treasure chuckled and shook his head.

Gradually, word of his sculptures spread in the city, and he was able to start a little business of his own. His parents, who continued to spoil him, were content.

Their son might have no eyesight, but he was an outstanding person. Eventually, it reached the point that he began to care for them in their old age. It was a touching thing, and they felt very content. Their hearts were filled with the love of a lifetime.

However, they still worried about Little Treasure. Although he had the

skill to support himself in life, they still felt that he should marry.

Unfortunately, being blind, few families would be willing to marry their daughter to Little Treasure.

Three years passed. Eventually, someone acted as a matchmaker, and found a young woman from a small household somewhere in the city who agreed to marry Little Treasure. She was very pretty, and the fact that she had agreed to the marriage left Little Treasure's parents delighted. They gave their life savings as a betrothal gift, and escorted her back to their home.

That day was one of the happiest days in this old couple's life. They held the wedding ceremony, and hosted the wedding banquet. Red lanterns were hung. After the relatives and neighbors departed, Little Treasure's parents led him to the wedding chamber.

He was nervous. He had never even met this girl before. Everything had been arranged by his parents. However, he was a filial son, and would support his parents' decisions, even though marriage was something he didn't particularly care about.

Furthermore, he was curious as to why this young woman would agree to the marriage when he was blind.

When he entered the room, there she was sitting on the bed, wearing red wedding garments and a red veil. Although he couldn't see her, he could sense her presence.

Feeling his way across the wall, he approached the bed, reached out, and touched his wife.

She shivered, but didn't say anything.

He stood there quietly for a moment before gently lifting up her veil. "May I touch your face?"

The young woman seemed very nervous; she was gripping her garments tightly with both hands, and was breathing heavily. Her anxiety was no act; deep in her heart, she wasn't sure if she was doing the right thing. But this was what she had always wanted, regardless of whether it was in

terms of past lives or the present....

She took a deep breath and then said, "Yes."

Little Treasure reached out and gently ran his fingers down her face, feeling her eyes, her nose, and her lips. Suddenly, a tremor ran through him.

Chapter 1495: World of Ice and Fire!

“It’s you...?” Little Treasure said, his heart trembling. It was a face he could never forget. In the darkest, loneliest moment of his entire life, it was the source of the only warmth he had felt.

Eventually, Little Treasure’s hands dropped away from her face. He smiled a warm, happy smile.

Years passed.

The ninth life of Meng Hao’s clone went on quietly on the first continent. Meanwhile, Meng Hao’s true self was in the enormous flower out in the starry sky of the Vast Expanse, in the middle of his search for the final copper mirror shard!

He was currently sitting cross-legged in a world frozen over with ice. “Once I get this final mirror shard, my collection will be complete, and I’ll be able to... call out to the copper mirror and summon it back to me!”

Everywhere he looked he saw nothing but ice. There were plants, but they had apparently been frozen. They were beautiful, like ice sculptures.

“What a strange place....” he thought, his eyes flickering. He had been searching this area for the copper mirror shard ever since entering the flower. However, the coldness here was so intense that it would frighten even 9-Essences experts. It pressed against him at all moments, threatening to transform him into an ice sculpture, just like everything else.

After resting for a bit, he proceeded along through the world of ice. No matter how he searched, he couldn’t find the copper mirror shard, and yet, he could sense that it was somewhere inside of this enormous flower.

As he proceeded along, he suddenly heard a powerful roar coming from somewhere off in the distance. The ice around him shuddered, and cracks appeared on its surface.

He frowned, turned to look behind him. Off in the distance, was what appeared to be an enormous mountain, fully 300,000 meters tall, its peak

piercing the clouds above. The mountain was currently shaking, and was the source of the roaring he had just heard.

A closer look would reveal the truth: he wasn't looking at a mountain, but an enormous giant. The giant was currently trying to rise from a cross-legged position, but powerful Essence-sealing symbols surrounded it, preventing it from doing so.

Meng Hao snorted coldly. This 300,000-meter-tall giant was the first life form he had encountered after entering this place twenty years ago. As soon as it saw him, it had transformed from a mountain into a giant. Eyes flickering with killing intent, it had begun to fight him.

Communication with the thing had proved impossible. Meng Hao had tried to show it good will, but it had completely ignored him, and its killing intent had even increased. Angered, Meng Hao had begun to fight it.

The 300,000-meter-tall giant was no match for him, but also seemed to be incapable of dying. Throughout the twenty years, Meng Hao had fought and defeated it several times, and yet had never been able to obliterate it completely.

In the end, he didn't feel like fighting it anymore, and had sealed it in place so that he could search for the copper mirror in peace. Now, the giant was trying to break free from the seals.

Meng Hao looked away, ignoring the giant as he continued his search.

Years passed in which he continued to fly along. Eventually, he realized that it seemed to be getting less terrifyingly cold. At a certain point, he didn't even feel cold.

"Could it be that I'm entering another area?" he thought, picking up speed. A few months later, he hovered in the air looking off into the distance. Unexpectedly, he saw numerous cities within the icy landscape.

They were scattered about seemingly randomly, and there were many of them. Tens of thousands. Furthermore, these cities were filled with countless living beings.

They were huge. Compared to these cities, the cities that existed in the

Mountain and Sea Realm and Planet Vast Expanse were like toys.

Meng Hao hovered there in thought. During the many years he had spent searching for the copper mirror shards, he had been to many, many worlds. He had seen all sorts of living creatures that were not cultivators. There were some that looked like wild beasts, and some that even had bodies made of mist.

At first he had been shocked at the sight of such beings. But after some time passed, it became nothing out of the ordinary. He was now fully aware that there were countless bizarre forms of life within the starry sky of the Vast Expanse.

Meng Hao looked at the cities up ahead. Even though they were quite a distance away, he was still able to clearly see the living beings within them.

They looked similar to cultivators, except they were enormous. Most were about thirty meters tall, like mountains trudging along. Even the babies among them were at least three meters tall.

Some of the oldest appeared to be over 300 meters tall sometimes as tall as 3,000. With his divine sense, Meng Hao was able to locate the most powerful among these entities. It was a giant at the early 9-Essences level, and it was at least 30,000 meters tall.

He wasn't located within one of the cities, but was sitting cross-legged in the form of a mountain.

However, based on the fluctuations of the giant's aura, it was possible to tell that it was bursting with life force. Surrounding the giant were other powerful experts in the form of mountains. None of the others were 30,000 meters tall, but there were a few hundred who were 15,000 meters tall.

These giants were the native species of this world, and Meng Hao could tell that they were of the same species as the 300,000-meter-tall ice mountain giant he had seen before.

Further off in the distance, Meng Hao was shocked to find that the realm

of ice ended. Beyond, he could see green plains.

There were also countless cities visible upon the plains. All of them were connected together to form something like a wall, within which were living beings that resembled cultivators. They were all of a normal height, and yet had wings growing out of their backs.

The wings changed depending on the levels of their cultivation bases. The more powerful they got, the redder they became.

“What an interesting world. One part is freezing, another is warm.... Wait, no. This is the middle of the world, where it’s warm, making it suitable for inhabitation by these giants and those avian people.

“If that’s the case, then further off in the distance... it must be burning hot.” Meng Hao sped into motion, heading toward the green plains. His cultivation base was so far above the living beings he passed by that none of them even detected his presence.

He continued to fly along for years. Down below, the lands began to change from green to red. Burning lava flowed, casting a crimson tinge to the sky. Things started getting so hot that most living beings who attempted to enter the area would be transformed into ash.

It reached the point where even 9-Essences cultivators would be completely destroyed. Meng Hao was beginning to feel uncomfortable. Eventually, he saw something off in the distance that looked like a mountain. He also felt an aura no weaker than the one he had felt from the ice giant. That aura was now rushing toward Meng Hao as if it had just sensed him.

Everything rumbled violently as the mountain transformed into a volcano that erupted with blazing fire. As it did, a crimson Flamephoenix burst out from within. It looked at Meng Hao, its eyes flickering with killing intent and vigilance. Then, it shot toward Meng Hao, surrounded by a sea of flames.

As it neared, the Flamephoenix shrank down into the form of a woman. She was beautiful, with two crimson wings, and she stood upon a sea of elemental fire that shot through the air.

“You’re not welcome here, foreigner,” she said in a furious voice. “Get the hell out!” As her voice echoed out, the air around Meng Hao shattered, and the sea of flames roared toward him.

His eyes flickered, although he wasn’t surprised to find such a powerful entity here. The ice plains had the Icemountain Giant, and the land of flames had a Flamephoenix. The world was balanced.

“To be able to practice cultivation up to a level comparable to the peak of the 9-Essences, and even a bit beyond that, means these things are intelligent. Furthermore, they couldn’t possibly be prone to changeable emotions.

“In that case, the Flamephoenix and the Icemountain Giant immediately acting hostile must indicate... that they know about the copper mirror shard!” His eyes glittered as he fell back, waving his right hand to summon numerous mountains, which smashed into the sea of flames.

Rumbling sounds echoed out, and the world shook. The woman-form Flamephoenix’s face flickered. Killing intent swirled in her eyes, and she transformed back into a Flamephoenix, then charged toward Meng Hao in attack.

“I have a shape-changing magic too!” Meng Hao said. Snorting coldly, he changed into an azure roc, the color of which then continued to deepen until it was almost violet. A Demonic qi rose up, causing everything to tremble. The violet-colored roc shot toward the Flamephoenix, and the two collided in midair.

Heaven shook, the Earth trembled, and cracks spread out in all directions. Portions of the ground collapsed, and lava blasted up into the air. When two peak 9-Essences entities fought, it could have a huge influence on the surrounding world, and if it went on for too long, could destroy everything in the area.

The Flamephoenix let out a piercing cry, then fell back, changing back into the form of a woman. She coughed up a mouthful of blood, then glared up at Meng Hao.

Meng Hao’s expression was the same as ever as he also transformed

back into human shape, and then looked coolly at the Flamephoenix.

“With a cultivation base like that, your Excellency,” the Flamephoenix said, “you can’t possibly be some nameless nobody from the starry sky of the Vast Expanse. What is your purpose here!?” Despite clearly fearing Meng Hao, she didn’t appear ready to give in at all.

“You’re a lot more reasonable than that lump of ice,” Meng Hao replied coolly. “I have no ill intentions here.”

The Flamephoenix’s eyes flickered. “Lump of ice? You saw Patriarch Icemountain?”

“Patriarch Icemountain? You mean that 300,000-meter-tall giant? Yes, I ran into him, and left him sealed where I found him.”

The Flamephoenix’s eyes narrowed as she tried to determine whether or not Meng Hao was telling the truth. She took a deep breath, looking at Meng Hao with even more fear than before.

After a moment, she asked, “Well then, why exactly have you come here, your Excellency?”

“For this!” Meng Hao said, waving his sleeve. A copper mirror shard appeared in front of him, emitting dazzling light amidst the light of the surrounding flames.

Chapter 1496: Decision by Battle

Meng Hao did nothing to conceal his purpose in coming. In fact, there was no need for him to do so. Considering the level of his cultivation base, acting wishy-washy could affect his mental state.

To powerful experts like Meng Hao, hiding one's cultivation base and then suddenly exploding out unexpectedly was boring and meaningless. They wouldn't do things like that unless absolutely necessary. In the long run, it could destabilize one's Dao heart. Relying on such paltry tactics could be an obstacle to striving for a great Dao.

After possessing a certain level of power, the best thing was to call upon such power openly.

No matter what plots or plans were afoot, the best thing was to be open and aboveboard, to crush everything in one's path.

The Flamephoenix found it hard to deal with Meng Hao's straightforward demeanor. She took a few steps back, panting, then said, "I've never seen anything like that thing. But since you're already here, Fellow Daoist, I can help you look for some clues. However, I have to warn you, the Ice-Fire Realm is very large. You need to prepare yourself to waste a lot of time."

Meng Hao looked at the Flamephoenix, then chuckled and shook his head. Looking very sincere, he said, "This object is very important to me. If it's truly impossible to find, then I'll leave. However, if I'm prevented from leaving the Ice-Fire Realm before it's sealed up again, then... I'll have no choice but to destroy it. This is a very important matter. I hope you can understand, Fellow Daoist."

Upon seeing the copper mirror shard moments ago, the Flamephoenix didn't have much of a reaction at all. Her face didn't even flicker. However, Meng Hao had experienced far too many things in life for her to be able to hide her shock from him.

Everything became especially obvious when she hinted about taking a long time.

He knew that this world wouldn't stay open forever. He had waited outside for hundreds of years before it had opened, and based on his calculations, he was quite sure that it would close again in about one sixty-year-cycle. If he didn't leave at that time, he would have to wait a very, very long time for another chance. It would only be when the flower bloomed again that he would be able to leave.

There would be too many opportunities for mishaps during that time, and Meng Hao wasn't willing to risk that.

Thus, the words he had spoken moment ago were no threat. They were merely a clear explanation of his intentions.

"Your lands can be destroyed, as can the ice plains," he continued in a calm voice. "If that happens, then the temperature created by the two will vanish, and all the living beings that exist here will be destroyed.

"As for you and that Patriarch Icemountain, I might not be able to kill you two, but if I can seal one of you, then I can seal the other.

"If I can't find what I'm looking for, I'm confident that, in my fury, I will seal you in a way that will ensure you can't free yourselves for a very, very long time. So long that... when the flower blooms again, I'll return and seal you again.

"A thousand years? Ten thousand years? I'll keep you sealed away indefinitely. One day, my cultivation base will be powerful enough to kill you, and then I'll do just that. However, before you die, I'll Sousearch you, and get all the answers I'm looking for. In the end, I'll get what I want.

"Of course, that will take a very, very long time. Many people will die. Too many. I really don't want to do that, and so I'm hoping... that you won't force my hand, Fellow Daoist." With that, he clasped hands and bowed. Then he looked up, smiled, and said, "As for which decision you choose to make, it's all up to you."

Each sentence he spoke caused the Flamephoenix's heart to pound. By the time he finished, her heart surged with waves of rage. And yet, she had no choice but to suppress them, as she knew that everything Meng Hao had just said was true.

He really would do just as he had said, and it was highly likely that things would happen just as he had described. Although things might not play out exactly as he intended, he would likely make up for any discrepancies in his plan, and ensure that the outcome was the same.

Everything came down to the cultivation base. Neither she nor Patriarch Icemountain, despite being beyond the peak of the 9-Essences level, were a match for this young man.

What was even more telling was that, despite the calmness of his gaze when he looked at her, she could tell that there was explosive violence hidden therein. His pupils were bright red, and when she looked into them, it was almost as if she could hear countless howling voices. There was a fury inside of him that left her mentally shaken. Even her cultivation base was thrown into chaos, and the sea of flames around her faltered.

Time ticked by, but Meng Hao didn't seem anxious. He simply waited for her reply, a smile on his face the entire time.

After the time it takes an incense stick to burn, the Flamephoenix sagged in place a bit, and let out a bitter sigh.

Then she looked up at Meng Hao and said, "The Ice-Fire Realm didn't always look like this. According to the legends, a long time ago, a precious treasure fell out of the starry sky and split open the lands.

"It was a mirror shard, one side of which emitted intense light and heat. That side created the world of fire. The other side of the shard emanated intense coldness, which was what created the lands of ice.

"The living beings here were also changed. They gradually transformed, until years later, the Icemountain Tribe appeared, as well as the Flamephoenix Tribe.

"If you take the shard away, then you will have no need to attack the Ice-Fire Realm to destroy it. It will happen automatically. All life will perish.

"You are not the first person to come here looking for the mirror shard. Throughout the years, it has not been uncommon for foreign entities to

enter when the flower blooms, with the intent of snatching the shard.”

Meng Hao frowned. He had already speculated that things would be this way. He had guessed as much as soon as he saw all of the ice sculptures, and also from the fact that the Icemountain Giant and the Flamephoenix had attacked him instantly.

After a moment of thought, he said, “Well, give me the mirror shard, and I’ll separate your worlds and seal them to keep them safe. Then, I’ll come back within a thousand years to strengthen the seals.”

“You....” The Flamephoenix simply didn’t believe that he was telling the truth.

“You’ll just have to trust me,” Meng Hao said, his eyes glittering coldly. He had long since run out of patience. He would make a promise, but if she refused to believe him, then there was nothing else he could do. The mirror shard was too important.

The Flamephoenix began to breathe deeply, and various expressions flashed across her face. Her eyes flickered with killing intent, and yet, she couldn’t take the risk of refusing Meng Hao’s offer, which would then lead to him destroying the world. On the other hand, agreeing with him also came with the risk of the world being destroyed anyway.

Deep in her heart, she still didn’t want to give in to him.

After a long moment, she looked over coldly and said, “I can’t make a decision like this on my own,” she said. “Patriarch Icemountain must also agree.”

Meng Hao chuckled. He waved his sleeve, and blast of wind shot out in all directions as he began to fly in the direction of the ice plains. The Flamephoenix gritted her teeth and flew along behind him.

This time, Meng Hao went much faster than last time. It only took a few months to cross the entire Ice-Fire Realm. The Flamephoenix was shocked, and her heart was pounding. Normally speaking, she wouldn’t have been able to keep up, but she happened to have some magical items that gave her just enough speed to follow.

A few months later, deep within the ice plains, Meng Hao and the Flamephoenix heard a roar of fury. Patriarch Icemountain, the 300,000-meter mountain, was shaking as he struggled against the seals.

The Flamephoenix looked at him, then took a deep breath as the fear inside her heart mounted. Meng Hao smiled as he looked back and forth from the Icemountain Giant to the Flamephoenix.

“If the two of you don’t agree,” he said, “then it’s going to take me a lot longer to get the shard.... Furthermore, after searching everywhere in vain, I’m getting the sensation that the mirror shard is underground....” He looked down at the lands below. The strange thing was that he had actually tried to blast the ground open earlier, and yet, despite the level of his cultivation base, he had been unable to do so.

After some thought, a flicker of determination appeared in his eyes, and he waved his finger toward Patriarch Icemountain.

Instantly, the seals unraveled, and a roar of rage echoed out as he rose to his feet. Without even a moment’s pause, he launched himself toward Meng Hao, punching out with his fist.

The Flamephoenix seemed shocked, but then she gritted her teeth and similarly attacked Meng Hao.

Meng Hao smiled. His expression didn’t change the all, but he did speak, his voice icy: “Looking to die?!”

As the words left his mouth, his cultivation base erupted with power that had been building up for several hundred years. Eight Essences were unleashed, along with the shocking power of his fleshly body. Combined with his Demonic qi, and the power in his blood, he could unleash incredible force.

It left the Icemountain Giant trembling, and the Flamephoenix shaking. As Meng Hao hovered there, an enormous head appeared behind him, radiating infinite darkness.

It had a vicious horn jutting out of its forehead, long black hair, and glowing red eyes that seemed to contain oceans of blood. The Demonic qi

caused the world to distort, shaking everything violently.

If that were all there were to it, it might not be a big deal. But then Meng Hao extended his right hand, and seven copper mirror shards appeared. They then melted, transforming into black threads that spread out to cover his right hand, and then his torso, left arm, and legs. His entire body, with the exception of his head, was now covered with black armor!

As soon as the armor appeared, a savage and explosive aura erupted out, causing his power to rise.

RUUUUUUMMMMBLLLLLE....

The incredible power surging out made it seem as if Meng Hao could unleash the power of the starry sky itself, as if he were the ultimate monarch, the most powerful being in the Vast Expanse.

Gradually, bits of Transcendent power began to radiate out from him. He looked down at the Icemountain Giant and the Flamephoenix, and then beckoned at them.

“Didn’t you want to fight? Let’s fight!”

Chapter 1497: Borrowing Power for the Search!

The Icemountain Giant's pupils constricted; as of this moment, he could sense how powerful Meng Hao's aura was, and knew that he was absolutely no match. However, he was still sure that Meng Hao wouldn't be able to kill him. He took a step forward, and struck out with his fist.

The Flamephoenix erupted with power, transforming back into her avian form. A sea of flames erupted around her as she shot toward Meng Hao. In the blink of an eye, intense booms echoed out as the three of them began to fight.

The ground quaked. The world shook. Meng Hao performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, and the pitch-black head behind him howled and shot toward the giant and the phoenix.

The Icemountain Giant's body vibrated, cracks spreading out across his surface before he completely exploded. However, in almost the same instant, he formed back together, and seemed no less willing to fight.

The Flamephoenix also fell back, her eyes shining brightly as countless flaming magical symbols appeared around her.

"Too weak," Meng Hao said coolly as he hovered there in midair. "Time to use your trump cards. If I win, you must tell me the location of the mirror shard. If you win, then I'll leave immediately."

"Very well," said the Icemountain Giant. "The outcome of this battle will determine everything."

The Icemountain Giant didn't seem surprised at all about what was happening. Meng Hao wasn't sure exactly how he and the Flamephoenix were communicating, but that didn't matter. The giant roared, beating at his chest with his fists. As a result, countless chunks of ice fell off of him, which then formed together into an enormous greataxe.

The Flamephoenix flickered as more flaming magical symbols appeared, and her body grew in size until it was 30,000 meters long. Intense,

terrifying heat radiated out from her, causing the surrounding icy landscape to melt. And yet, only a moment later, it froze back up again.

Meng Hao's eyes flickered, and his mouth twisted into a cold smile as he stepped forward and unleashed a fist strike. It was none other than the Devil-Butchering Fist!

That fist strike contained the Life-Extermination Fist, the Self-Immolation Fist, and the God-Slaying Fist. All of those fist strikes became the Devil-Butchering Fist. The sky dimmed, as if this fist were replacing everything above and below as it rocketed toward the Flamephoenix.

The giant howled, hefting the greataxe and then slashing it down toward Meng Hao's fist. The giant simultaneously performed an incantation gesture with his left hand, causing intense coldness to spring out, creating an all-freezing windstorm that swept over Meng Hao.

The Flamephoenix let out a long cry, and the flames around her emitted Essence aura as they transformed into a crimson claw.

It was a bird-like claw, bright red, that shot directly toward Meng Hao.

In the blink of an eye, the giant and the Flamephoenix met Meng Hao's Devil-Butchering Fist. When they slammed into each other, the sky shattered, and the lands were destroyed. The entire world shook violently, and Meng Hao fell backward seven or eight paces. As he looked on, the giant's axe transformed into ash, and the giant himself shattered. A moment later, though, he formed back together, although he seemed a bit smaller than before.

As for the Flamephoenix, blood sprayed out of her mouth, and she was trembling visibly. Her injuries were serious, but only a moment later, the flames around her roared back to life.

The fear in their eyes as they looked at Meng Hao was clear. And yet, there was also an uncompromising gleam. Clearly, they would not agree to Meng Hao's demand, and just hand over their precious treasure. Not unless there was absolutely no other choice.

However, it was at this point that Meng Hao suddenly vanished. When

he reappeared, he was right in front of the giant, whereupon he waved his finger.

Rumbling sounds echoed out as the giant fell back, icy coldness exploding off of him. Even as he prepared to fight back, Hexing magic Essence suddenly erupted out onto from Meng Hao's finger, after which he unleashed another punch.

The giant roared as cracking sounds emanated out. In the blink of an eye, he recovered, but he was still sent tumbling backward by 3,000 meters. Meng Hao instantly followed up, and at the same time, the Flamephoenix closed in.

Before the Flamephoenix could even get close, Meng Hao began to spin, his left foot sweeping through the air to create a powerful cyclone that slammed into the giant.

The giant howled, trembling as he fell back yet again. His body collapsed, but instantly recovered. At the same time, coldness exploded out of him as if to consume Meng Hao. Meng Hao snorted coldly, opening his fist up into a palm, wherein appeared a sealing mark.

He shoved his hand out in front of him, unleashing the Inside Outside Hex. A force of expulsion appeared, shoving the coldness away. Simultaneously, Meng Hao unleashed another fist strike.

The blow landed directly onto the giant's chest. Cracks spread out, and the giant exploded into fragments of ice. Meng Hao subsequently waved his sleeve, causing a wind to spring up and scatter the fragments.

Those fragments seemed capable of piercing through any barrier, and they quickly began to form back together. However, Meng Hao's eyes flashed with red light, and he performed an incantation gesture, then waved his finger, unleashing the Eighth Hex's Essence of space. His target was the Flamephoenix, who was closing in behind him.

The power of space erupted out, and the Flamephoenix's eyes widened. She let out a piercing shriek, and flames erupted off of her as she summoned a huge flame giant to take her place within the sealing power.

However, even as the Flamephoenix used a substitute to escape the Spatial Sealing, Meng Hao arrived and unleashed a fist strike. Flames burst out, but she quickly recovered, but Meng Hao then continued to unleash one fist strike after another.

He struck a total of thirteen blows. Each time, the Flamephoenix would collapse into flames, but then reform. After every blow, her face was a bit paler, and she was trembling even harder. When the final blow landed, she was sent flying backward 3,000 meters, blood spraying out of her mouth.

Just as Meng Hao was about to give chase, a furious roar echoed out.

“Foreigner, you’ve forced our hand. It’s time for you to die!” It was the reformed giant, who spread his arms wide and howled, “Ice-Plains Flower!”

As he howled, intense coldness rose up from the ice plains around him. The coldness rushed toward the giant, and at the same time, the layers of ice in the area vanished, to reappear atop his body. It only took a moment for all of the cold and ice to form together into a huge flower on his right hand!

It was a flower made of ice, resplendent and beautiful, and as it grew larger, a terrifying aura emanated out from it. The entire world shuddered, and suddenly seemed to grow completely devoid of sound.

Next, the Flamephoenix, which Meng Hao had shoved 3,000 meters away, wiped the blood from her mouth and glared at him with a powerful murderous aura raging out. Eyes flickering with killing intent, the sea of flames around her roared even more powerfully than before, transforming into a pillar of fire that shot up into the sky.

The sky turned bright red, like a sea of fire, and at the same time, the Flamephoenix cried, “Crimson-Flame Flower!”

Almost immediately, the crimson sea of flames began to form together into a gigantic flower. The seemingly everlasting flame stretched from the sky to the land, filling half the world with matchlessly intense heat.

At the same time, the ice flower emanated intense coldness which froze everything it touched.

Meng Hao watched all of this happening with an expectant gleam in his eyes.

At the same time, the giant and the phoenix said, "Combined attack!"

The giant's body shattered, swirling up to merge into the ice flower, which radiated even more resplendent light than before.

The Flamephoenix likewise merged into the flame flower, ensuring that both of the flowers were the peak existences in this entire world.

The two flowers then shot toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao threw his head back and laughed uproariously.

"I've been waiting for this trump card of yours!" As soon as the words left his mouth, his energy skyrocketed. His hair rose up, and his black armor flashed as he performed an incantation gesture with his right hand. The Essence of the Eighth Hex appeared, then the Seventh, and the Sixth... all the way to the Essence of the First Hex. Then, they began to merge together.

"Eight Hexes, combine!" He threw his arms out in either direction, as the eight Hexing magic Essences transformed into threads, which then became a huge net.

The net spread out in all directions, and in the moment that it made contact with the ice and flame flowers, the world shattered. Heaven and Earth distorted as a huge shockwave blasted out in all directions. Within the blast, Meng Hao coughed up a mouthful of blood, and his body was shredded into a mass of bloody flesh.

And yet, his eyes shone brightly. This was the moment he had been waiting for!

"Copper Mirror Armor, Shake the Heavens!" The armor on his body suddenly flew off him, transforming back into seven shards. Then, they merged together, forming the almost-complete shape of a mirror!

This was the second true function of the copper mirror!

Almost as soon as that mirror appeared, the terrifying blast created by

the ice and flame flowers, and the eight combined Hexes, was deflected by the mirror, changing it from an outward blast... into... a focused attack aimed at the ground!

Within the ice and flame flowers, the faces of the giant and the phoenix both fell. However, there was no time for them to do anything in response. Meng Hao's cultivation base power exploded out like a sharp blade, joining the blast as it slammed into the ground.

In the blink of an eye, the terrifying peak power of all three of these powerful experts slammed into the layers of ice below.

BOOOOOOOOOOMMM!

The lands quaked in response. Meng Hao couldn't single-handedly break open the ground, but the combined power of all three of them caused the plains around them to collapse. An enormous crater opened up, to reveal... a sprawling necropolis!

Underneath this world of ice and fire, there was a necropolis that stretched out in all directions.

In the moment that the necropolis appeared, the aura of the eighth mirror shard erupted with unprecedented intensity. Meng Hao laughed heartily as he flew down toward the necropolis.

Chapter 1498: The Return Call!

Meng Hao moved as fast as lightning, shooting into the necropolis and following the tug toward the copper mirror shard.

The Icemountain Giant and the Flamephoenix were so shocked by the use of the mirror shards that they had no time to react. The ground was destroyed, and before they even had time to think about what that meant, they were flying down to try to stop Meng Hao.

“Don’t let him get the precious treasure!” These were the two most powerful entities in this world, but they were still incredibly nervous as they unleashed all the speed they could muster to fly into the necropolis.

Unfortunately for them, they were just a bit slower than Meng Hao. He was like a cascading beam of light that shot through the passageways down below. Despite the numerous twists and turns, the copper mirror shard was like a burning signal fire in his mind.

He didn’t pause for even a moment. In every location where a passage split off in two directions, he knew exactly which way to go, almost as if he had been here before.

Behind him, both the Icemountain Giant and the Flamephoenix shrank down in size as they followed in pursuit. Their hearts were filled with anxiety; the giant couldn’t stop roaring in anger, and yet it did no good.

Time passed. The pursuit went on for months, and yet the giant and the phoenix were unable to catch up to Meng Hao. As for Meng Hao, he sped along through the passageways of the necropolis until eventually... he caught sight of the final copper mirror shard!

It was in a deep pit, half of which was liquid ice, the other half being lava. In the very middle of the two was the mirror shard, which had split the area like yin and yang.

The area was filled with a pulsing aura of both fire and ice, which was apparently what had created this strange place to begin with.

Meng Hao looked down, eyes gleaming with anticipation. Without any

hesitation, he stretched his right hand out toward the pit and made a grasping motion.

Instantly, the entire pit shuddered, as though it were on the verge of exploding. The mirror shard itself began to shake, then gradually loosened from its position as if it were about to fly over to him.

It was at this point that a powerful roar echoed out from inside the liquid ice, as a sinuous dragon burst out. It was snake-like, and composed completely of frigid ice. Energy surging, it shot directly toward Meng Hao.

Simultaneously, a dragon of flames burst out from the lava, roaring as it charged toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao snorted coldly. Keeping his right hand in the same position as before, he performed an incantation gesture with his left hand and then waved it downwards. Demon Sealing Hexing magic erupted out in a powerful attack, enveloping the dragons of ice and fire, shoving them away.

They spun back and were about to attack again when Meng Hao's left hand flashed in a sealing gesture. Instantly, two streams of mist shot out, transforming into humanoid shapes, like clones. They immediately shot toward the dragons of ice and fire, grabbing them and shoving them backward physically. The two dragons were immediately pinned against the nearby rock walls.

At the same time, the two clones transformed into sealing marks which locked the dragons down. Now, no matter how they roared, they couldn't move at all.

Next, the copper mirror shard shook even harder, and then began to rise up into the air. It was at this point that the Icemountain Giant and the Flamephoenix began to feel the world trembling around them. Their faces fell, and they pushed forward with increased speed. Within the space of a few breaths of time, they shot out of the tunnel.

"Stay your hand!" they roared. However, they were just a bit too late. As the copper mirror shard flew up into the air, the lava and the liquid ice exploded up. Meng Hao then reached out and grabbed the mirror shard.

His eyes shone with brilliant light, and he was even panting a bit. He had been searching for this shard for hundreds of years. At long last, his collection was complete.

The mirror shard itself seemed to be crying out with joy. In the blink of an eye, it melted, transforming into black threads that merged into Meng Hao's armor. The armor now seemed more complete than ever, and the aura it emitted was shocking to the extreme.

Heaven and Earth trembled. The entire world shook. Without the copper mirror shard, the lava and ice within the pit began to mix together, and all the lands trembled. The ice mountains began to melt, and the flames began to die out. Destructive power spread out in all directions.

The Icemountain Giant trembled and let out a piercing cry. The Flamephoenix looked over, and seeing that he was about to attack, she gritted her teeth... and blocked the way to Meng Hao!

Rumbling filled the air as the Icemountain Giant roared in rage. "Flamephoenix, what are you doing!?"

"He already has the precious treasure," she replied. "Do you really think we can get it back, even if we fight together?!" The Icemountain Giant roared, and the two of them began to argue. Then they ceased communicating verbally and began to confer via divine will.

Meng Hao stood nearby, watching. He didn't interfere, but instead, focused on examining the summoning power of the copper mirror shards. As of this moment, he felt more strongly than ever that he could summon the copper mirror itself!

Not too much time passed before the Icemountain Giant let out another powerful roar. His expression was unyielding, and yet simultaneously, defeated. Finally, he had given in. The Flamephoenix turned to face Meng Hao. Taking a deep breath, she transformed into human form, then clasped hands and bowed deeply.

"Fellow Daoist, we were being rash earlier," she said. "If it's not too much trouble, we would like to request that we keep the previous agreement."

Meng Hao looked at her coldly. As of this point, he could completely ignore this place and whatever happened to it. However, his action of taking the copper mirror shard had initiated the destruction of the entire world.

After a moment of thought, he performed a double-handed incantation gesture, causing his cultivation base power to erupt out and fill the area. Then, he unleashed Demon Sealing Hexing magic. Starting with the First Hex and going all the way to the Eighth, he drew upon his most powerful divine ability, the Eight Hexes combined.

However, this time he had eight mirror shards in the form of armor, making the divine ability even more powerful. Colors flashed, and the wind screamed. The faces of both the Icemountain Giant and the Flamephoenix flickered.

“Seal!” Meng Hao said, shoving his hands down toward the pit. That motion caused incredible sealing power to fall down onto the liquid ice and the lava.

Instantly, the two liquids ceased mixing together and gradually became still.

Cracking sounds emanated out, and at the same time, sweat dripped down Meng Hao’s forehead. His cultivation base power erupted again, and the power of the sealing mark of the combined Eight Hexes expanded, completely covering the liquid ice and the lava. Now, instead of destroying each other, they were locked in place. Although they weren’t completely separated like they had been before, they were no longer merging!

At the same time, the melting of the ice plains came to a halt. Although they were warmer than they had been before, they were still ice plains.

On the other side of the world in the lands of flame, fire once again flickered. Although it wasn’t as prevalent as it had been before, and the temperature had been reduced, the fire still existed. As for the two tribes which inhabited the world, although they were thrown into a bit of chaos, there was no deadly danger anymore.

“When I say I’ll do something, I do it,” Meng Hao said. “Right now, my

cultivation base isn't powerful enough to completely resolve the problem. However, with this seal in place, this world will be safe for the next ten thousand years.

"Once my cultivation base is strong enough, I'll come back and remove the world from danger for all time." He looked down once more at the deep pit, and then over at the Icemountain Giant and the Flamephoenix.

The Icemountain Giant glared, but the Flamephoenix smiled bitterly and then clasped hands and bowed.

Meng Hao likewise clasped hands and bowed deeply toward the two of them.

"This object is very important to me. Please... accept my apology for any offense I've caused. In the future, I'll definitely repay you." Although Meng Hao knew that neither of them believed him, he was being very sincere.

With that, he turned and left toward the exit of the necropolis.

Behind him, the Icemountain Giant and the Flamephoenix looked at each other with dour expressions. However, there was nothing they could do at this point. Sighing, they also left.

Now that he had the copper mirror shard, Meng Hao could fly even faster. After twenty days, he reached the exit passageway, and then flew out into the Heavens. Taking a deep breath, he looked back down at the lands below for a moment, then shot out at top speed into the void. A few months later, he emerged from the huge flower.

Now that he was back in the starry sky of the Vast Expanse, his eyes flickered, and his heart thumped with excitement. For the moment, he chose not to summon the copper mirror, but instead shot off into the distance.

He tried a few times to make a connection with his clone's ninth life, but for some reason, could only vaguely sense him. He had absolutely no way to know what exactly his clone was doing or experiencing. It was almost as if he were covered by a dense fog. However, he could sense a familiar and terrifying aura brewing inside the clone.

“Something is really strange about this ninth reincarnation. Could it be because he’s forming the final sealing mark of the Ninth Hex?” That was the conclusion he came to. The Seal the Heavens Hex, the Ninth Hex, was incredibly powerful, and didn’t even seem congruous with the world. Perhaps its incredible nature was why this unexpected turn of events had occurred.

After a few more months, he had reached a barren and remote location within the starry sky of the Vast Expanse. There could be seen a land mass completely devoid of life, and filled with sprawling ruins.

Meng Hao had passed by this place a few hundred years before, and could sense that there was something strange about this place. Apparently, the energy of the Vast Expanse was weak here. As such, this was the location he had chosen to call out to the copper mirror.

He began to set up numerous spell formations in the area, most of them being restrictive spells. He had no idea what unexpected events might occur after he summoned the copper mirror, but based on all of his experiences, he was certain that something would happen, and that he needed to be ready!

He spent ten years making all of the preparations. In the end, the area looked like it had before, but the truth was that it was now as dangerous as a dragon’s pool or a tiger’s den. Finally, he sighed contentedly. Taking a deep breath, he sat down cross-legged in front of a dusty boulder. Eyes shining, he performed a double-handed incantation gesture, and the eight mirror shards flew out and began to circulate in the air around him. Apparently, they were forming a miraculous spell formation.

Eyes focused and filled with intense anticipation, he said, “Copper mirror, parrot... the time has come to reunite!

“I call upon the power of these eight mirror shards to summon you, copper mirror! Whatever distant location you are in, return to me!” Waving his sleeve, he thought back to everything that had happened in the past, then once again performed a double-handed incantation gesture. He sent his divine will out, making contact with the eight mirror shards.

That activated the miraculous spell formation. Rumbling sounds echoed out, and the eight shards formed together... into the face of a mirror, with one missing piece!

The mirror seemed to be absorbing Meng Hao's divine sense power. Then... it exploded as a brilliant column of light that illuminated everything in the area and caused the starry sky to tremble.

“Copper mirror... return to me!

“Parrot... return to me!”

Chapter 1499: Familiar Fluctuations!

His voice seemed to thrum with bizarre power as it echoed out in all directions.

It was a power that came from Meng Hao's memories, from his longing. It filled the column of light as it shot off into the starry sky of the Vast Expanse.

"Copper mirror... return to me...."

"Parrot... return to me...."

"Lord Fifth... return to me!"

As the column of light formed by the eight mirror shards shot up from the desolate land mass, the Vast Expanse trembled, and the starry sky trembled.

In that same moment, countless powerful experts suddenly seemed to sense something. Their expressions flickered, and they looked in the direction of the beam of light.

In the locations where Meng Hao had discovered the other mirror shards, the powerful experts he had encountered gazed off into the distance, expressions flickering.

The giant lizard. The vicious head. The Icemountain Giant and the Flamephoenix. All of them could sense the auras of the precious treasures which had once been theirs.

At the same time, there were other entities within the starry sky of the Vast Expanse who were stirred into action.

Ripples spread out from the column of light, sweeping out through the Vast Expanse. At the same time, there was apparently a will which began to wake up, that then spoke out in an indistinct voice.

"Destroy that spell formation. Stop him...." Although the voice was difficult to make out, it could be heard by countless entities, and in response, their hearts trembled. Suddenly, a power of will seemed to fill

them, taking control of their bodies. Almost immediately, they began to fly in Meng Hao's direction at top speed.

There was a fog, within which shrieking voices could be heard. Countless mysterious specters could be seen therein, which surged out into the starry sky, radiating murderous intentions.

On a crimson land mass, brutish roars echoed out as numerous 30,000-meter-long crimson dragons flew out into the Vast Expanse.

An enormous head floated amidst the dust that filled the starry sky. It had been dead for countless ages, but now its eyelids suddenly opened. There were no eyes, only empty holes, and yet suddenly glints of red could be seen inside. Moments later, a cloud of red dots flew out from within the eyes, forming something like a beam of light. Each one of those dots was a bright red bug, the lot of which flew off into the distance.

In another area, a huge coffin floated out in the void. It was broken down and dilapidated, with no corpse inside. Suddenly, a face materialized and floated above the coffin.

"That's... the will of the Vast Expanse...." murmured a voice. The coffin vanished, and when it reappeared, it was far off in the distance, heading toward Meng Hao.

Ripples filled the starry sky of the Vast Expanse as countless entities appeared. Some were beasts, some were other types of life, but all of them were heading toward Meng Hao.

There were deathly, corpse-like spirits, minotaurs, creatures with tentacles for arms, stone golems, and extremely beautiful creatures that were only a third of the size of a normal human.

Virtually every type of existence possible could be seen....

The Immortal God Continent and the Devil Realm Continent were shaken, and countless cultivators flew out, eyes red as they charged into the Vast Expanse.

As of this moment, the entire starry sky of the Vast Expanse was trembling.

Back on Planet Vast Expanse, in the First Sect, Han Bei was sitting there cross-legged in meditation. Suddenly, her eyes opened, and they shone with a strange light. She flickered into motion, vanishing, then reappearing back out in the starry sky.

In addition to all of those things, there was something else that noticed the fluctuations. In a remote spot near the very edge of the starry sky of the Vast Expanse, there was a withered old tree, embedded into the trunk of which was a copper mirror.

The copper mirror suddenly began to vibrate and shine with bright light. Then, the image of a parrot became visible.

It seemed confused as it looked off into the distance, as if it were thinking about the past. After a long moment, a blank look filled its eyes.

“Someone... is summoning me....

“This aura is very familiar, but I can’t remember who it is....

“However, being called Lord Fifth... I like it. Seems familiar, very familiar....” After a long moment, the parrot faded away. Then, the copper mirror flew off of the tree, transforming into a current of light that shot toward the direction of the calling.

Meanwhile, Meng Hao still sat cross-legged on the land mass out in the starry sky. His divine sense was spread out in all directions, allowing him to feel how shaken the Vast Expanse was. Although he wasn’t able to see it clearly, he could sense the location of the copper mirror, and could feel... that it was currently rushing toward him at top speed.

“It’s coming. It’s definitely coming....” A tremor ran through him, and his eyes shone with excitement. He had been waiting for hundreds of years for this chance to reunite with the copper mirror.

“What a pity the meat jelly perished....” he thought, his heart filled with grief. However, he took a deep breath, confident that the day would come in which he would be able to resurrect the meat jelly.

“According to how fast it’s moving, it will need about seven days to get here!” Meng Hao’s eyes glittered. Even as he sensed the copper mirror, he

could also feel an incredible ill will rising up against him within the starry sky of the Vast Expanse.

It was intense, something that could seemingly affect the very essence of life. Meng Hao could tell that as the ill will spread out, countless powerful experts began to head in his direction.

Furthermore, in addition to the ill will, there was something adding a blessing to his enemies, increasing their speed dramatically, almost to the point of a teleportation, enabling them to move far, far faster than the copper mirror.

“It seems all the work I put into setting up these defenses wasn’t a waste after all....” Meng Hao’s eyes flickered with killing intent as he thought back over the ten years he had spent setting up all of the spell formations. It had been difficult to suppress his anxiousness to summon the parrot, but now he realized that it was definitely worth it.

It was at this point that the first species of enemy appeared in the starry sky up above. The mysterious specters closed in at high speed, invisible to the naked eye, but detectable via divine sense. They seemed matchlessly vicious and evil, and as soon as they appeared, they charged toward Meng Hao, causing rumbling sounds to echo out.

He looked up them, eyes flashing with coldness. Before the specters could even get close to the land mass, they slammed into something like an invisible net. Flashes of light appeared, and the specters let out miserable shrieks.

Via divine sense, Meng Hao was able to see their bodies being sliced to shreds by the huge net, completely destroying them. And yet, before they could even fade away, more specters appeared off in the distance.

There were clouds of them, seemingly endless numbers that swarmed around the land mass. Were it necessary to count them, there would be more than a billion, creating an awe-inspiring scene as they charged in attack.

Booms rang out, and the land mass shook, but Meng Hao’s expression was the same as ever as he performed a double-handed incantation

gesture, causing the first of the nine shield layers he had built to shine with brilliant light, destroying the murderous specters.

The specters didn't seem to fear death at all. They blasted bodily into the shield, causing it to shudder and teeter on the verge of being destroyed. Meng Hao's eyes flickered with killing intent, and he snorted coldly. Then, his hands flashed in a double-handed incantation gesture, and he slapped them onto the ground.

"Detonate!"

Instantly, the first shield layer surged with blinding light, then exploded, sending a destructive blast out in all directions. It swept over the specters like a deadly tide, causing bloodcurdling screams to be heard as the specters were wiped out of existence.

There were some among them who were incredibly powerful, and yet, even they were incapable of evading destruction. By the time the blast dissipated, more than ninety-nine percent of the specters had been eradicated, leaving behind only those who were at the Paragon level.

Of those, there were seven, with two being at the 9-Essences level.

They were tattered and torn, their expressions those of confusion, and yet they continued to attack. Meng Hao snorted, right hand flashing with an incantation gesture that caused wisps of smoke to curl outside of the second shield layer. The smoke rapidly took the shape of a hand, which grabbed out toward the specters.

Booms could be heard as three of them were summarily crushed. The remaining specters fled, and just when the hand was about to pursue them, a mighty roar echoed out from the distance.

A beam of red light appeared, moving so fast it seemed like a teleportation. In the blink of an eye, it appeared directly in front of the huge hand; it was a gigantic, crimson dragon, bursting with the power of peak 9-Essences. As it slammed into the hand, the hand shattered, and then the dragon braced itself and charged onward in attack.

Even as it moved forward, more crimson dragons appeared off in the

distance. One after another they could be seen, including three which were at the peak 9-Essences level. The rest were weaker, but the crimson dragons were powerful entities to begin with, and there were over a million of them. They filled the starry sky, instantly converging upon the second shield.

The lands shook violently as the previously invisible second shield began to distort under the powerful attack. A moment later, it was destroyed.

The resulting fragments blasted out like a shockwave. In response, Meng Hao sat there on the land mass below, eyes flickering with killing intent. These shields had been erected using a technique he had acquired within Shui Dongliu's legacy, and were very similar to the Mountain and Sea Grand Aegis.

Based on the current level of Meng Hao's cultivation base, it was far, far mightier than the shield which had protected the Mountain and Sea Realm. And yet, the crimson dragons were capable of shattering the second layer.

However, the price they paid to do so was heavy!

Chapter 1500: Holding the Line!

All of the crimson dragons beneath the Paragon level were shredded to pieces. Even as the reek of blood spread out in all directions, Meng Hao's hands flashed in a double-handed incantation gesture, and three enormous hands appeared outside of the third shield. Each one radiated the power of the peak 9-Essences level, and they shot directly after three crimson dragons.

Then the starry sky trembled as, unexpectedly, countless red dots appeared on the three enormous hands. A close look revealed that each one of those red dots was a bug of some sort. In the blink of an eye, they had completely covered the hands, accompanied by an odd droning sound. More and more bugs appeared, until everything seemed to be a huge swath of red.

Then, off in the distance, a sinister aura of death appeared. It rapidly spread out in all directions, and within it could be seen an endless collection of corpses. Each one of those corpses seem to have been possessed, and they formed a huge army that charged toward the land mass.

The red bugs and the army of the dead all unleashed a massive onslaught onto the third shield layer.

Shocking rumbling echoed out in all directions.

Meng Hao said nothing. Looking off into the distance, he spread both hands out and pushed them down onto the ground. Then he closed his eyes and ignored everything happening outside the shields. His entire mind poured into the copper mirror shards to intensify their call.

Time passed. Two days later, the copper mirror was still a beam of bright light shooting toward Meng Hao's location.

As for the land mass, it was shaking violently. The third shield layer had already collapsed, and now the fourth was teetering on the verge of destruction. Half of the red bugs were dead, and most of the army of the dead was gone.

However, a host of stone golems had appeared, and because of their roaring attacks, the fourth shield was almost destroyed. The stone golems attacked with utter madness.

In addition to them were minotaurs and strange, tentacle-armed entities. The tentacled entities did not have powerful fleshly bodies, but their magical techniques were incredibly shocking. Because of all of that, the fourth shield layer was finally destroyed. Even as the explosion rippled out, the stone golems' eyes gleamed with madness, and they suddenly self-detonated.

BOOOOOOOOOOMMM!

The self-detonation of the stone golems caused the shockwave of the fourth shield layer's destruction to blast into the fifth shield layer. Cracks spread out as the swarms of bizarre creatures continued to attack, and the fifth shield layer disintegrated.

Next came a rain of a billion or more arrows, which whizzed toward the sixth shield layer, bursting with shocking levels of power. In the blink of an eye, the sixth shield layer was destroyed.

That caused the seventh shield layer to appear, at which point Meng Hao opened his eyes. He looked out, his expression grim. Then he took a deep breath and performed a double-handed incantation gesture, causing a blurry face to appear on the surface of the seventh shield.

It looked almost like a specter as it flew up to meet the rain of arrows. Next came a host of tiny humanoid creatures no taller than an average person's knee.

More time passed. On the third day, the seventh shield layer was destroyed by the tiny creatures. In the three days that the armies of bizarre creatures had been attacking the shield layers, they had sustained severe casualties, losing even Paragon-level entities.

Creatures of all kinds and types could be seen. Of the numerous types of beings Meng Hao had encountered throughout his hundreds of years of traveling, only a small portion were represented here. These creatures had received the summons which had echoed out from the will of the Vast

Expanse, and thus, it was with bloodshot eyes that they battered against the seventh shield layer.

On the fourth day, the seventh shield layer collapsed. On the fifth day, the eighth shield layer was destroyed.

On the sixth day, the ninth shield layer was shaking. Meng Hao opened his eyes again and looked out at the seemingly infinite armies of bizarre creatures. Their vast numbers were truly a shocking sight to behold.

They had numerous 9-Essences experts. Although they didn't represent even a fraction of the power that existed out in the starry sky, they were possessed by a madness that ensured they would not rest until Meng Hao was destroyed.

"One more day...." Meng Hao murmured. "The ninth shield layer will last for that much longer." Meng Hao could sense that the copper mirror was still some distance away. It would definitely appear within one day.

However, it was this point that Meng Hao opened his eyes, and his face fell. Off in the distance in the starry sky, an enormous planet had suddenly teleported into the area behind the land mass he was currently on. The planet immediately vibrated as it began to pick up speed.

Rumbling could be heard as the planet crushed numerous creatures in the army in its attack on the ninth shield layer.

Even the armies of bizarre creatures could hardly endure the ear-splitting rumbling which echoed out as the area where the ninth shield layer was hit immediately shattered. Then, the enormous planet began to move as, shockingly, it transformed into a giant. It stood there tall and mighty outside of the shield, grinning down at Meng Hao.

In the same moment that it grinned, a streak of light shot through the hole it had torn into the shield and headed directly toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's face was very grim as he sat there cross-legged. He suddenly extended his right hand, then clenched it down violently. A boom rang out as he grabbed a tiny creature no taller than his own knee.

It was a woman, spectacularly beautiful, who exuded an enticing charm.

However, her face was pale, and her expression one of disbelief. Apparently, she couldn't believe that the cloaking magic she cultivated could be seen through by Meng Hao.

Before she could beg for mercy, Meng Hao squeezed his hand down, and a popping sound rang out as her body exploded.

Things weren't over yet, though. Meng Hao rose to his feet, and his left hand unleashed a vicious fist strike. A crimson dragon suddenly appeared directly in the path of his fist. A look of confusion could be seen in its eyes as it seemingly allowed the fist strike to hit it, completely destroying its entire massive frame.

At the same time, Meng Hao tilted his head to the side to avoid a deadly attack from one of the specters. As the specter sailed past him, he suddenly opened his mouth and latched onto the specter.

Even as it let out a miserable shriek, Meng Hao inhaled deeply. The specter subsequently shrank down as it was sucked into Meng Hao to become part of his cultivation base.

All of this takes some time to describe, but happened in the briefest of moments after the planetary giant punched a hole into the shield and smiled.

Meng Hao's expression was as calm as ever as he strode forward thirty meters. As he did, the eight copper mirror shards, which remained in the spot he had been standing earlier, emitted a bright shield.

It consisted of a riot of colors which flowed across its surface, and was... the most powerful of Meng Hao's preparations, the tenth shield layer.

This shield protected, not the land mass, but the spell formation which was issuing the summoning call to the copper mirror.

Meng Hao stood outside of the shield, looking around, his eyes flickering with killing intent, a murderous aura swirling around him.

He said nothing, and yet his actions made his message clear.... No one would be getting past him to destroy that spell formation!

The entire battlefield went completely silent. However, that silence only lasted for a few breaths' worth of time. Then, howls and roars broke the silence as countless figures poured through the hole which had already been punched in the shield. As for the planetary giant, it began to batter the ninth shield in other locations.

Meng Hao took a first step forward, and the lands shook. Because the energy of the Vast Expanse was weak on his land mass, the shaking of the land itself influenced everything around it, slowing down the approach of the enemy.

Because of that, a few entities shot out in front of everyone else. They were none other than the Paragon-level experts. Although only one was at the 9-Essences level, with the rest being at the 8-Essences level, they were still powerful Paragons. As soon as they appeared in the open, Meng Hao shot forward, unleashing the Devil-Butchering Fist.

Life-Extermination. Self-Immolation. God-Slaying. Devil-Butchering.... They merged together into one fist, one punch, which shocked everything and shook the starry sky. Incredible power was unleashed on the handful of Paragons, and in their shock, blasted into them even as they were still preparing to defend themselves. They were crushed as easily as dry twigs.

Booms rang out as they exploded, destroyed in body and mind. By a fluke, only the 9-Essences expert survived, blood spurting out of various wounds. But then Meng Hao took a second step forward, appearing up in midair, where he punched out a second time. However, he didn't strike the Paragon, but someone else.

The air in front of him rippled as an old man appeared, a man with pitch-black skin and two horns sticking out of his head, who emanated the power of the peak 9-Essences level.

His expression was grave as he faced Meng Hao's single punch. Roaring, he unleashed a divine ability, summoning a black ox, beneath whose feet swirled flaming wind.

Meng Hao's single attack destroyed many of the bizarre creatures who were pouring in through the hole in the shield. Even the old man himself

coughed up a mouthful of blood and tumbled backward, face filled with fear.

By this point, only half of the sixth day had passed. Meng Hao took a third step, although it was not to attack the old man with the pitch-black skin. He appeared outside of the ninth shield layer... in front of the planet-sized giant.

“You’re strong, huh?” he said coldly. Even as the words left his mouth, the giant shivered, and his heart began to pound. He began to move backward.

Before he could get away, Meng Hao transformed into a black roc which shot forward like lightning, stabbing into the giant’s forehead and then bursting out from the other side of his head!

Chapter 1501: Set Foot In Here, and Die!

The planetary giant let out a bloodcurdling shriek that was so loud it caused numerous nearby creatures to explode.

Blood sprayed out in all directions. The planetary giant's eyes went dim, and then its head exploded. By the time its body started to topple down, Meng Hao in black roc-form was back on the land mass.

However, in that very moment, his face flickered with surprise as a sense of imminent danger rose up inside of him. In the blink of an eye, he transformed from a huge roc back into an ordinary-sized human. At the same time, a black beam of light shot through the spot once occupied by his head. Even though it didn't touch him, it left his cultivation base trembling.

Had he not reacted when he did, the attack would have blasted into the head of his roc form. Although Meng Hao wouldn't have been killed, he would have been seriously injured.

He spun around and saw a coffin some distance away. Floating in the air above the coffin was the face of an old man, who was staring at Meng Hao.

The instant their gazes met, Meng Hao suddenly got the feeling that this old man was at the same level as himself. Considering Meng Hao's current power, he was at a level past the peak of 9-Essences, and virtually anyone he met was someone he could fight with ease. However, when he looked at the face above the coffin, he was filled with a sensation of danger and crisis.

His eyes flickered as he suddenly vanished. When he reappeared, he was standing only a few meters in front of the tenth shield. If he was a match for the old man out in the starry sky, then back in this location, with the power of the lands around him at his disposal, he could definitely crush him.

After all... on the land mass itself, the energy of the Vast Expanse was weak.

The old man above the coffin didn't enter the land mass, though. He remained outside, looking coldly at Meng Hao. Then he looked at the thirty-meter wide shield, and his eyes flickered with a strange light.

Meng Hao stood there, a cold expression on his face. Then he lifted his foot and stomped down, causing a huge boom to echo out, and shockwaves to ripple out. As the blast echoed out, countless bizarre creatures in the area, creatures who didn't fear dying at all, were instantly killed.

Gradually, everything went quiet again. Outside of the broken ninth shield, there were still endless numbers of bizarre creatures. However, none of them dared to try to fight their way onto the land mass. Anyone who tried to get to the land mass, regardless of the level of their cultivation base, was killed in body and mind. Those who managed to escape were as rare as phoenix feathers or qilin horns.

The silence didn't make Meng Hao nervous at all. He was trying to buy time, and could tell that the copper mirror was getting closer and closer. At the most, it would take half a day for it to appear in front of him.

However, it was at this point that, beyond the vast army of bizarre creatures, fluctuations filled the starry sky as more than ten thousand figures appeared. Astonishingly, those figures were cultivators!

Furthermore, as soon as they appeared, they radiated the aura of the Immortal God Continent. The other bizarre creatures in the area didn't seem surprised at all, but as for Meng Hao, his eyes instantly erupted with an intense, uncontrollable killing intent.

This aura, the aura of the Immortal God Continent, was something he would never be able to forget. That aura belonged to an enemy who had caused the Mountain and Sea Realm to be destroyed, the meat jelly to die, the parrot's mind had to be erased, and had pushed Meng Hao to the brink of death.

Instantly, the redness in Meng Hao's eyes caused the entire area to seem somber and desolate.

However, as the saying goes, troubles come in pairs. In almost the same

moment that the forces of the Immortal God Continent appeared, another group of ten thousand figures appeared from another direction. They were difficult to make out at first, but they were also cultivators. They didn't emanate the aura of the Immortal God Continent, but rather were surrounded by the mist of the Devil Realm. In addition to that, they were led by a muscular man, who was none other than... one of the 9-Essences experts Meng Hao had fought in the past.

The instant he saw Meng Hao, his expression became one of shock, and his killing intent intensified.

Meng Hao, on the other hand, smiled, a smile filled with icy coldness. He had already been focused on slaughter, but now, his desire to kill rose to greater heights than before.

In almost the same moment that he smiled, the forces of the Immortal God Continent and the Devil Realm Continent flew into the gap which had been opened in the ninth shield, and headed down toward the land mass.

Their deadly charge changed the situation on the battlefield. The other creatures in the army had been silent before, but now they began to roar and howl. They also joined in the charge, ensuring that masses of enemies were flooding through the hole in the shield.

It only took a moment for the land mass Meng Hao was standing on to begin to tremble from the force unleashed by the countless charging figures.

The army was vast, and scattered among their numbers were many powerful experts. Even the old coffin man had finally passed through the shield.

Booms echoed out. Meng Hao's hair whipped about as he took seven steps forward. When the seventh step landed, the ground quaked as an enormous foot crushed countless enemies into a bloody pulp. Simultaneously, Meng Hao moved directly in front of the muscular man from the Devil Realm Continent.

The man's mind reeled; he had never imagined that the person he would

be fighting today would be Meng Hao, nor could he ever have guessed that after mere handful of centuries that had passed, Meng Hao would have become so powerful.

However, there was no time to ponder the matter. Meng Hao's right hand pierced through his defenses as easily as a sharp blade through bamboo, and then latched onto the man's neck.

"It is with you that my revenge begins." As his hoarse voice echoed out, power erupted from his hand, and the 9-Essences expert exploded into pieces, destroyed in body and mind.

Even as Meng Hao killed the man, eight figures appeared around him. Shockingly, these people were the most powerful experts among their various races and tribes, and they were joining forces in one massive attack.

Eight enemies. Meng Hao threw his head back and bellowed, causing numerous mountains to descend. However, he didn't send them to attack his enemies, but rather, caused them to cover over himself. In the blink of an eye, 100,000, then 1,000,000, and then 10,000,000 mountains were superimposed over him, creating a powerful shield defense. A moment later, the combined attack of the eight powerful experts slammed into the mountains.

The seemingly endless group of mountains exploded. At the same time, Meng Hao fell back, slamming into one of the powerful experts behind him. His speed was such that his enemy was blasted into a haze of blood and flesh, his fleshly body destroyed. His soul flew out, which was incapable of doing anything to stop Meng Hao from escaping the encirclement.

In that moment, the old coffin man's eyes glittered, and he emerged from the coffin itself, looking like a specter. He took a step, appearing directly in front of Meng Hao. He extended his hand, and the full power of his cultivation base surged as he attempted to tap Meng Hao's forehead.

"Just what I was waiting for," Meng Hao said, smiling. Even as the man's finger closed in, Meng Hao's eyes flickered coldly. The old man's face fell,

but before he could react, Meng Hao waved his hand, creating four lines around the old man.

“Spatial Sealing!”

The four lines instantly transformed into a canvas. The power of the Spatial Sealing erupted out, and the old man was powerless to stop it from sealing him inside of the canvas!

When he appeared in the painting, he immediately unleashed the power of his cultivation base, causing the canvas to burst into flames. Considering the incredibly high level of his cultivation base, the sealing was only powerful enough to hold him for a moment.

However, a moment was all Meng Hao needed.

He grinned viciously, unleashing the power of his cultivation base, waving his hand as he summoned the Eighth Hex. Then came the Seventh, and the Sixth... all the way to the First. They transformed into long threads, combining into a net which he flung toward the old man.

“Eight Hexes, combined!” As the words left his mouth, the net swept out to cover over everything in the area.

The net passed through countless enemy creatures as though they weren’t even there. No one could stop it.

The Paragon from the Immortal God Continent blinked in shock as the net passed through him. The minotaurs, the specters, the stone golems, the cultivators from the Immortal God Continent, all of the various living beings from the other locations... were swept over by the net.

Not even the red bugs could evade it. They were small in size, but the net was dense. When it had spread out to its limit, Meng Hao made a grasping motion, and the net began to retract, returning through all the same beings it had passed on its way out.

The net rapidly shrunk down into Meng Hao’s palm, until it was nothing more than a dazzling light.

Then, every being surrounding him on the land mass began to tremble.

Blood began to spray out everywhere... as they were sliced into ribbons. Some of them became gore that splattered around on the ground, others were turned into ash....

The armies outside of the land mass gasped, and then everything went deathly silent. Despite the fact that the will of the starry sky was urging them to attack, their instincts and their terror caused them to look at the land mass with minds spinning.

Meng Hao remained calm, but his eyes shone with bright red light. He looked up at the old man sealed in the painting, which was still burning. The old man howled as he prepared to burst out from inside.

Meng Hao stared at him coldly, then waved his hand. Once again, the scintillating net appeared, which he threw out to cover the old man.

This time, the sealing power was far greater than before, and the old man was powerless to escape its effects. All he could do was let out an unyielding roar.

Meng Hao turned his attention to the hosts outside in the starry sky. Surrounding him were countless corpses, so many that it was impossible to count.

He said nothing. However, the image of him standing there, and the thought of what he had just done in the battle, became a powerful warning to everyone who remained alive.

Anyone who sets foot in here... dies!

Chapter 1502: Who Am I?

Time passed. Meng Hao wasn't standing in the exact center of the land mass, but he was certainly the center of all attention.

Outside, beyond the battered remnants of the ninth shield layer, was an army of bizarre creatures that filled the starry sky from end to end. They all hovered there silently, looking down, but unwilling to set foot onto the land mass.

The massive gap in the shield still existed; it hadn't closed up. However, despite the many hours which had passed, not a single individual had entered through it.

The strange nature of the land mass ensured that the energy of the Vast Expanse was scant, and also made it so that the will of the Vast Expanse was weaker. Because of that, the creatures that made up the army weren't as easy to influence as before.

Although they still radiated a murderous aura, they were still mostly under the control of their primary instincts. As such, they were kept silent and unmoving by the realization that they would surely die if they entered the land mass.

If things kept going like this, Meng Hao would essentially have won the battle. By now, he could sense that the mirror was very close and would appear in front of him very soon.

"It's almost here.... The copper mirror!

"Parrot... return to me!" Meng Hao took a deep breath. Within the thirty meter shielded area behind him, the eight copper mirror shards radiated brilliant light. The pillar of light which rose up from them was like a torch on a dark light, almost blinding as it continued to summon the copper mirror.

Enough time had passed for an incense stick to burn, and Meng Hao began to pant as he looked off into the distance. As for all the creatures in the army, they could sense a pressure building from off in the distance,

something which left them feeling very uneasy, even jittery.

They could almost make out a beam of light shooting, not through the starry sky, but through some other swath of darkness.

However, it was in this very moment that all of a sudden, ripples exploded out directly in front of Meng Hao. The air in front of him had been still and unmoving before, but now, a finger appeared!

Its appearance was ordinary in all aspects, but as soon as it appeared, it caused the entire world, and even the entire starry sky, to begin to shake. It superseded all light, and in the darkness of the starry sky, only it seemed to shine brightly!

It seemed to be moving in slow motion as it reached out towards Meng Hao's chest.

Unexpectedly, he was completely unable to dodge it.

A boom rang out; Heaven shook and Earth trembled. Cracking sounds could be heard from the land mass as fissures snaked out in all directions. Even the ninth shield layer shattered.

Blood sprayed out of Meng Hao's mouth, and he tumbled backward, slamming into the surface of the tenth shield layer. The shield distorted, and almost instantly shattered into pieces. Meng Hao continued to tumble backward nearly twenty-five meters before grinding to a halt. Coughing up another mouthful of blood, he slowly looked up at the rippling area up ahead of him.

Now, it wasn't just a finger that was visible. A gaunt figure appeared out of thin air, and as soon as his foot touched the surface of the land mass, everything began to vibrate. At the same time, a supreme and paramount aura exploded out from him.

It was as if he were the representative of the entire starry sky, as if a single word from him could be considered natural law in the entire Vast Expanse. Apparently, a glance from him could determine the life or death of any of the beings which existed in the starry sky.

"I am the Emissary of Allheaven," he said coolly. The echo of his voice

caused the entire land mass to crumble into nothing. The only exception was the thirty-meter area upon which Meng Hao stood. All other locations collapsed into dust from the single word uttered by this Emissary of Allheaven.

The surrounding swarms of creatures felt an indescribable reverence rising up from their souls. They bowed their heads and dropped to their knees to kowtow.

“Greetings, Emissary....”

The gaunt man seemed middle-aged, but had an ashen face and deeply profound eyes. He stood there, clad in a black robe, looking coldly at Meng Hao.

“Why haven’t you knelt yet?” he asked.

It was one sentence with only five words, but as soon as it left his mouth, a pressure burst out that defied description. It slammed into Meng Hao, causing intense rumbling sounds to echo out. Meng Hao’s cultivation base was at the peak of the 9-Essences level, but it almost seemed impossible to bear the pressure. His knees shook as the pressure became like two hands pushing down onto his shoulders, as if he were being forced to kneel.

But then, Meng Hao smiled. It was a vicious smile, complete with glowing red eyes. Shocking power erupted out, staining the surrounding starry sky with redness.

The redness might not be able to compare with the blackness of the starry sky as a whole, but in this particular area, it was like a tempest that couldn’t be resisted.

“I, Meng Hao, have never kowtowed to the Heavens, nor bowed to the Earth. What makes you think... that I would kneel to scum like you?!” The redness in his eyes intensified, and his aura began to flicker with multifarious variations. Demonic qi erupted, and not only did he not kneel, he began to walk forward, one step at a time.

His energy began to rise up, and the redness raged like flames. Instantly, intense pressure began to crush down onto the Emissary of Allheaven.

The man's face flickered.

"You really want to die?!" he said, snorting coldly. He lifted his right hand, and killing intent exploded out as he shoved his palm toward Meng Hao. Intense pressure erupted that exceeded the 9-Essences level. If Meng Hao hadn't been on guard already, he would have been killed in body and mind.

And yet, he didn't stop moving for even a moment. In fact, he sped up. At the same time, his energy continued to build up, Demonic qi surged, and the red glow expanded.

Then, he clenched his right fist and unleashed the Devil-Butchering Fist. As the fist bore down on the Emissary of Allheaven, the red glow in the area rumbled, making it seem like there were infinite fists about to slam into the man.

Then, Meng Hao transformed into black roc-form, only to change again into an azure-colored roc, which instantly changed color yet again to crimson. Then, he shot like lightning toward the Emissary of Allheaven, slashing at him with razor-sharp claws.

Next were countless mountains which caused Heaven to shake and the Earth to tremble as they descended. However, Meng Hao didn't stop at that. He unleashed the Blood Demon Grand Magic, and followed up with Demonic qi formed into the shape of a gigantic head, which viciously snapped its mouth at the Emissary.

Booms rang out, filling the starry sky. In just a few short moments, Meng Hao unleashed his most deadly attacks, and then ended them all with the combined Eight Hexes.

The Emissary fell back repeatedly, face growing increasingly pale. Finally, killing intent flickered in his eyes as he took to flight, not to attack Meng Hao, but to try to destroy the spell formation. However, Meng Hao quickly intercepted him.

Instead of falling back again, the Emissary of Allheaven unleashed another attack. When it slammed into Meng Hao, he coughed up a mouthful of blood and tumbled backward several hundred meters. The

Emissary then stepped forward, appearing directly in front of the eight copper mirror shards. Then, he lifted up his right hand and shoved it violently forward.

And yet, Meng Hao simply smiled. Eyes shining with madness, he waved his finger toward the Emissary.

As he did, a beam of light shot toward the land mass through the starry sky, moving at indescribable speed. It slashed through the hosts of creatures, destroying many of their number who could not evade, transforming them into nothing more than ash.

In the blink of an eye, an entire section of creatures was destroyed. The Emissary's face fell as the beam of light closed in on him, then stabbed through his chest on its way to the spell formation.

Finally, the light faded away to reveal what had been inside... an ancient and primitive copper mirror!

As soon as the mirror appeared, the eight shards melted together, then flowed into the body of the mirror itself, to form... a complete mirror!

A primordial aura erupted out from the mirror, shaking the starry sky and sending boundless ripples out in all directions. The Emissary's face fell, and he backed up. As for Meng Hao, he looked excitedly at the mirror.

"Return to me!" he said. The mirror vibrated, and a blurry figure appeared within the mirror, a parrot. It looked out coldly at Meng Hao, seemingly confused. It was as if it were looking at a stranger, and at the same time, that stranger seemed familiar.

After a moment, though, that feeling of familiarity faded. The parrot looked away from Meng Hao, and then turned and shot out into the starry sky, taking the mirror with it.

Meng Hao's face paled, and he coughed up a mouthful of blood. Seeing the parrot flying away filled his heart with pain, especially when he knew exactly why it had seemed so confused.

"Well, it is what it is. At least you're complete. Even though you're leaving, severing your destiny with me, I just hope... that you can find a

master better than me....”

The Emissary of Allheaven began to laugh uproariously. Although a huge hole had been pierced into his chest, no blood flowed out. He turned to look at Meng Hao, laughing the entire time.

“That mirror doesn’t belong to you any more. It erased its own mind. You spent almost a thousand years getting ready to summon it to you, and it was all a complete waste!” Somehow, this Emissary of Allheaven knew about everything Meng Hao had been doing.

“Now, since you feel like leaving the Vast Expanse, I’ll help you. I will help you follow the destiny which has long since been prepared for you!” Laughing, the Emissary of Allheaven flickered into motion, performing an incantation gesture with both hands as he shot toward Meng Hao. Then he waved his finger, and the entire starry sky of the Vast Expanse seemed to sink down, as if he were drawing upon some of its power, then merging it into his finger to attack Meng Hao.

Meng Hao defended with all of his might. Booms rang out, and blood sprayed out of his mouth. He seemed to be on the verge of being destroyed, forced into successive retreats. But then, the eyes of the parrot in the distant copper mirror suddenly flickered. It still seemed confused, and yet, a tremor ran through it. For some unknown reason, it suddenly had the feeling that if it left right now, it would regret that decision for the rest of its life.

“Who am I...? Who am I...?” The parrot shivered, and then the confusion faded from its eyes. Instead, it seemed to be struggling with itself, as though there were memories inside of it trying to awaken!

Chapter 1503: Transcendent Armor!

“Who is he...?”

“Why does he seem so familiar? I obviously don’t know him....”

“Why does it hurt so much to see him injured so? Why do I have this feeling that he’s a very important part of my life?!”

“Why...? Why...? And who am I...? I’m the spirit automaton of the copper mirror. No, wait. I’m a parrot.... Then who’s Lord Fifth? Who is this Lord Fifth...?”

“Aaaaahhhhhh....” The copper mirror began to tremble violently. Inside, the parrot howled, its eyes bloodshot as memories apparently bubbled up inside of it.

It couldn’t see the memories clearly, but for some reason, it knew that it couldn’t abandon the person who had summoned it. It could tell that he was very important, and that he... viewed the parrot as important too!

The feeling rising up within the spirit automaton gradually left it convinced that this person was the owner of the copper mirror!

“I can’t go!”

“How could I go?!?!” The parrot howled again, its eyes bright red and its mind in complete chaos. And yet, it didn’t hesitate for another moment. It turned, transforming into a flowing beam of light that shot through the Heavens at incredible speed, leaving the starry sky flaming in its wake.

This was also the starry sky of Allheaven, and yet it couldn’t slow the copper mirror down. Everything shook violently, and a roar of rage echoed out.

Meng Hao was currently wiping the blood off his lips. His eyes glowed brightly as he performed an incantation gesture, causing his cultivation base to surge as he prepared to fight. The Emissary of Allheaven was laughing coldly, and his eyes radiated an awe-inspiring light. Just when he was about to unleash another attack, his face fell.

He turned to look over his shoulder, and saw the copper mirror and parrot returning, slicing through the starry sky at top speed!

The man's pupils constricted, and his mind began to reel.

Meng Hao also saw what was happening, and his eyes gleamed with excitement. Then he threw his head back and laughed long and hard.

"Copper mirror, return to me!" he cried, his voice echoing out in all directions. Rumbling sounds echoed out as the parrot closed in. It flew toward him at top speed, and then slammed into his chest, and began to merge into him.

A tremor ran through Meng Hao as a familiar sensation spread out. At the same time, his laughter grew even brighter and clearer. The glow in his eyes grew warm. And that warmth was not directed at the Emissary of Allheaven, but at the copper mirror, and the parrot!

The Emissary almost couldn't believe what was happening, and his heart began to pound in his chest.

As for the spot where the copper mirror had slammed into Meng Hao's chest, no injury could be seen there at all, and it only took a moment for the copper mirror to vanish completely. Then, black strands began to spread out to cover Meng Hao's entire body.

At the same time, a towering pressure exploded out from him.

Meng Hao's heart was pounding. He could sense the existence of the parrot now, and although it viewed him as a stranger, there was still some of the old sensation that came from their past connection.

He took a deep breath, and his eyes shone brightly as he laughed, floating up into the air and taking control of the copper mirror.

As his hands spread out wide, the black strands continued to cover him, spreading out from his chest toward every other part of him.

In the blink of an eye, black armor covered his chest, upon which could be seen primeval designs. It seemed to contain an aura of the most ancient type. At the same time, Meng Hao's energy began to rise up to explosive

levels.

The Emissary of Allheaven had been just about to advance toward him, but the tempest which sprang up instantly slowed him down. The armor continued to cover Meng Hao, spreading out to both of his arms. As the black strands merged together, wicked spikes spread out to cover his shoulders with pauldrons that resembled parrot heads.

His energy exploded out in shocking fashion, causing all of the bizarre creatures in the huge army to tremble inwardly.

By this point, the armor had completely covered his arms, forming overlapping layers of sharp black scales. Now that the armor had covered his torso, it began to rapidly flow down across his legs.

A moment later, a huge vortex sprang up beneath his feet, every rotation of which threw the starry sky around it into chaos.

The pressure pulsing off of Meng Hao grew more intense, making him the complete focus of everything in the starry sky.

The Emissary of Allheaven was completely ashen-faced as he fell back into retreat. He was muttering, and if one listened closely, they might be able to make out the words he spoke.

“Transcendent Battle Armor!”

Many of the creatures in the army were coughing up blood, unable to stand up to the intense pressure, a pressure which surpassed the 9-Essences level, and was close to... Transcendence!

Booms echoed out, each one far louder than thunder, so loud that even Heavenly might seemed as if it would be crushed by Meng Hao's energy.

The final extension of the armor covered Meng Hao's head. A black mask covered his face, and a black cape rippled out behind him. It was a grand sight, with colors flashing and the wind blowing. An intense, ancient aura radiated out from Meng Hao. Then, something appeared in Meng Hao's hand... which he remembered very distinctly. It was... the Battle Weapon!

The black Battle Weapon pulsed with a cold glow that seemed capable of reaving the starry sky and shaking the Vast Expanse itself.

The instant the Battle Weapon appeared, a gleam of reminiscence appeared in Meng Hao's eyes. Looking down at it, he murmured,

"So old friend, we finally... meet again."

In the instant that his armor was complete, the aura Meng Hao radiated caused everything to shake. Ripples spread out, with him at the center, a tempest which shattered the starry sky.

The wind blasted into countless creatures in the surrounding area. All they could do was scream as they were transformed into ash. The look on the face of the Emissary of Allheaven was one of unprecedented seriousness as he continued to back up.

In the blink of an eye, the entire area was wrapped up in the tempest. The Vast Expanse trembled, and countless creatures in the army gasped. Deep in their souls, they began to tremble in fear.

It was hard to say who did it first, but one by one, they began to flee in terrified madness. They knew that if they didn't escape from the intense pressure which was building up, they would be destroyed in body and mind.

Even the 9-Essences Paragons had the same reaction.

Within the entire world of this stretch of the starry sky, Meng Hao was the ultimate existence. At the same time, an illusory image suddenly appeared behind him. It was enormous, gigantic, something that seemed capable of shaking the stars. It was a huge parrot!

The parrot's feathers weren't multicolored; they were black. It had a terrifying aura, which made even the Emissary of Allheaven gasp in fear of Meng Hao. Without even thinking about it, he began to back up even faster.

"Still not quite at the full level of Transcendence..." Meng Hao thought as he sensed the energy exploding out of him. It was the most incredible level of power he had ever experienced in his entire life up to this point.

“Even though it’s not Transcendence, it still makes me... the most powerful person under the Transcendent level!” He looked up, and the red glow of his eyes shone out through the black mask, making him look terrifying to the extreme.

“Well, it makes sense, since my Ninth Hex still isn’t complete....” he murmured. Then he took a step forward toward the fleeing Emissary of Allheaven. Before he could get very far at all, Meng Hao was right in front of him, whereupon he shoved out with his left hand.

“Get the hell back to wherever you came from!” he roared. The Emissary of Allheaven felt himself vibrating, and then he exploded. A roar of anger echoed out, and madness filled his eyes as the energy of the Vast Expanse quickly formed his body back together.

Meng Hao’s expression was icy cold as he hefted the Battle Weapon in his right hand, and then slashed it through the void. The starry sky... was split apart! The energy of the Vast Expanse which existed in the starry sky of Allheaven was riven down to its very source!

The starry sky trembled, and cracking sounds echoed out. Shockingly, a rift spread out, forming a huge circle, like a sealing mark. The energy of the Vast Expanse was not capable of entering within that area, resulting in the Emissary of Allheaven being cut off from his power source.

“To kill you would be as easy as flipping over my hand,” Meng Hao said coolly. He began to walk forward, and each step caused massive rumbling to echo out. After he had taken three steps, the Emissary of Allheaven roared, drawing upon the energy of the Vast Expanse inside of his body to materialize a trident with vicious, spiralled prongs.

Meng Hao’s expression was calm as he then shoved out with his left hand. The trident lurched to a standstill, then began to tremble. Meng Hao’s hand gradually formed into a fist, and the trident began to twist and distort. Then, a bang rang out as Meng Hao clenched his fist tight; the trident exploded.

Black mist began to roil out from the Emissary; clearly he was deeply weakened. For the first time, a look of fear could be seen on his face.

“So, you can feel fear, huh?” Meng Hao said calmly. He took a fourth step forward, appearing yet again in front of the Emissary.

The Emissary let out a miserable shriek, and tried again to flee. And yet, no matter what he did or how he fled, Meng Hao would appear in front of him.

“The reason I sealed this place down is because... I’m very curious about what exactly you are.” Meng Hao’s left hand shot out as he grabbed the Emissary of Allheaven by the neck.

“Oh will of Allheaven,” squeaked the Emissary, “oh Lord of Allheaven, save me....” In that very moment, though, Meng Hao suddenly began... a Soulsearh!

He began to Soulsearh the Emissary of Allheaven, who represented the starry sky of Allheaven!

Chapter 1504: Song Daozi!

As the Soulsearhing began, Meng Hao's mind filled with rumbling sounds. Shockingly, there were no memories to be seen! There was only a voice!

"Henceforth, you are the Emissary of Allheaven...." There was only that eternal voice echoing out within his mind. It was impossible to say when those words had been spoken, but they left Meng Hao's consciousness reeling as strongly as if he had been struck by a huge blow.

Even more astonishing was that the voice seemed to contain piercing power that reached out into Meng Hao. In the blink of an eye, the voice was echoing out in his own mind.

It was like a sealing mark, burning deep into his body, resulting in... Meng Hao being made the new Emissary of Allheaven.

His body trembled, and beneath his mask, his eyes shone with radiant crimson light. Demonic qi erupted out within him, surging to suppress the voice which echoed in his mind.

The scene out in the starry sky was of Meng Hao grasping the Emissary of Allheaven by the throat. It didn't appear as if anything strange at all was happening. However, the truth was that Meng Hao was facing incredible danger that threatened even his soul.

It wasn't that he hadn't been aware that performing a Soulsearh might be dangerous; as far as he was concerned, he had had no choice. This person claimed to be the Emissary of Allheaven, and even had some of the will of the starry sky upon him. Because of all of that, and because of the things Meng Hao had learned in the necropolis of the Vast Expanse School, he was able to form some speculations.

The starry sky of Allheaven, the starry sky of the Vast Expanse, had a will, and that will was none other than Allheaven's!

As the saying went, Allheaven fears the Immortal. Furthermore, Allheaven wanted the Demon to appear. All of that caused Meng Hao to

be filled with a sensation of imminent crisis, and also caused him to reach certain conclusions about why the Mountain and Sea Realm had been struck with such calamity.

Although he had no definite answers, he had a lot of clues. And therefore, this Emissary of Allheaven could be considered one of his greatest acquisitions. If he could squeeze some answers out of this man's mind, it would help him to understand the truth much more clearly. That would also give him a much greater chance at achieving victory in the future.

"You want me to become the Emissary of Allheaven? You... don't qualify!" Meng Hao let out a powerful roar, and his armor began to vibrate. The power of the copper mirror exploded out, combining with Meng Hao's Demonic qi to form a tempest which blasted out in all directions. It drove the sealing mark away, completely destroying it, wiping it out of existence.

It didn't matter how powerful that sealing mark had been in the past. After coming out from within the body of the Emissary, it was significantly weakened. Add in the fact that Meng Hao was at his peak state, and once he fought back, he was able to destroy the sealing mark and dispel the voice.

As the voice faded away, the Emissary of Allheaven trembled, and his eyes began to shine. All of the hair on his head turned white, and his skin began to wither up. In the briefest of instants, he aged into an ancient form.

At the same time, his mind was cleared of the sealing mark, and countless memories flooded back in. Because he was still in the midst of a Sousearch, Meng Hao could see all of those memories.

He saw a world that was not the Mountain and Sea Realm, not the Immortal God Realm, and not the Devil Realm. It was not the world he had seen in the necropolis. It was a strange land, and yet it was obviously located within the starry sky of Allheaven.

It was a flourishing world, and although it hadn't reached a level of

ultimate power, there were still many powerful experts. Most importantly, the world had legends of the Immortal. Apparently, it was a place like the Mountain and Sea Realm or Planet Vast Expanse, a place where the cultivators had Immortal Threads which, if they had the right destiny, could form an Immortal Root.

In other words, it was a world in which the Immortal could appear!

In this case, the word Immortal didn't refer to the Immortal Realm, but rather, what Allheaven feared... THE Immortal!

Meng Hao saw the Emissary of Allheaven in that world, except he was a young man. Meng Hao watched him practice cultivation and grow into a man. He started out as a rogue cultivator, who eventually exceeded all of his contemporaries. He unified the world in which he lived, reaching the absolute peak, 9-Essences.

At that time, this Emissary of Allheaven was not like he was now. He was focused on his goals, and was the center of all attention. Then, one day, Outsiders appeared from beyond. A huge war ensued, and the world was destroyed. All living beings died.

The man who would become the Emissary of Allheaven threw his head back and let out a bitter howl. Even as he was being surrounded by his enemies, he suddenly erupted with... Demonic qi!

He was forced to transform from the Immortal into the Demon, after which he used Demonic qi to slaughter his enemies. He fled up into the Heavens, and came to be focused on one thing and one thing only: revenge!

Revenge. Revenge! Revenge!!

That one thought was so intense that even in the midst of a Soulsearh, it left Meng Hao panting, shaken. All of a sudden, he was struck by... how the life of this Emissary of Allheaven was so similar to his own!

As he continued the Soulsearh, the Emissary trembled. His eyes no longer appeared to be filled with confusion. It was as if he were awakening after countless years of sleep.

He looked at Meng Hao, his eyes bright and clear. Not only did he do nothing to resist the Soulsearh, he took the initiative to cooperate with it. He opened up his memories, allowing Meng Hao to see everything.

As he did, his eyes flickered with reminiscence. Within the depths of his memories was an unyielding heart. There was regret. And there was a towering desire for revenge. But even more than all of that... there was bitter laughter.

It was a noiseless laughter that accompanied his white hairs as they fell out of his head and floated down. His body was withering up and turning into ash. It was as if his body had been fixed at a certain point in time, and then time forgot him. But now, all of the power of those years was being inflicted relentlessly upon him.

Meng Hao was shaken as he watched the memories of the Emissary of Allheaven. After escaping into the Heavens with only his desire for revenge, the future Emissary experienced many dangers, and also acquired much good fortune. His cultivation base became powerful, far more powerful than before. In fact, he even... stepped halfway into Transcendence.

It was a terrifying level of power that even far surpassed Meng Hao's current level as the most powerful person under Transcendence. What was referred to as being half a step into Transcendence came from the fact that there were three separate areas which could Transcend. Those areas were the soul, the Essence, and the body. Anyone who Transcended in even one of those areas would be referred to as being half a step into Transcendence.

The future Emissary of Allheaven had Transcended in body, reaching the same level as Nine Seals from the Mountain and Sea Realm.

After reaching that level, he came to understand that the reason his home had been obliterated was because of the Allheaven starry sky, and the will named Allheaven!

The reason his home had been obliterated was because Allheaven didn't wish for the Immortal to appear. Instead, he wanted the Demon to come.

The man who would become the Emissary paid a huge price to discover a weakness in the starry sky of Allheaven. Astonishingly, he managed to fight his way outside, to reach outside the Vast Expanse.

That was where the memories suddenly screeched to a halt. Whatever it was that he had encountered outside the Vast Expanse, it was impossible to determine. The memories were gone. The only thing that was clear was that a certain number of years later, he reappeared, except not as himself. By then, he had become... the Emissary of Allheaven.

Meng Hao was shaking as he loosened his grip. His face flickered, and he backed up, breathing heavily. Mixed emotions could be seen on his face as he looked at the Emissary of Allheaven.

The man's body was almost completely dissipated. He no longer seemed evil, but instead, weak and bitter. He had lived his life for revenge, but in the end, not only did he fail, he also ended up becoming the Emissary for the person he wished to exact vengeance upon.

Meng Hao stood there silently.

The Emissary looked down at his vanishing body, and then back up at Meng Hao.

"I can sense that you... are just like me," he said, his voice hoarse and ancient.

"Back then, I was defeated... but I hope that you can succeed!" He sighed and looked out into the starry sky, into the Vast Expanse. Then, a vicious gleam appeared.

"I wasn't always the Emissary of Allheaven. I am Song Daozi from the Seven Soils Realm!

"Allheaven, you are doomed to demise!!" Song Daozi threw his head back and laughed uproariously. It was a laughter that seemed to contain weeping. His body was slowly transforming into ash. As it did, his eyes flickered with memories, as if in this moment, he was about to finally reunite with his clan members, his family, and his friends.

However, before he vanished completely, his eyes suddenly gleamed with

bright light, as if his soul had suddenly seized. He looked over at Meng Hao, an expression of disbelief on his face. He even looked anxious, as if there were something important he needed to tell Meng Hao, but didn't have the time. Even as he faded away completely into dust, he managed to speak a few sentences to Meng Hao.

"I remember now! The weak spot in the Vast Expanse that I found all those years ago... is right here!!

"I remember now! I didn't find this place by accident, someone pointed it out to me....

"Wait, why can't I remember what that person looked like? I remember she was a woman....

"Her. She was the one who told me about this place....

"Fellow Daoist, the will of Allheaven is everywhere in this starry sky. Why did you pick this place??"

With that, the man was no more.

Meng Hao stared in shock at the space where the man had vanished. After seeing the look in his eyes, and hearing his final words, Meng Hao's heart filled with intense coldness.

The reason he had chosen this place to summon the copper mirror was not because someone had told him about it. During the process of searching for the copper mirror shards, he had stumbled across it himself, and could tell that the energy of the Vast Expanse was weak here. There was almost a sensation of expulsion and division.

After hearing what the man had just said, Meng Hao's heart began to thump. He immediately backed up, rotating his cultivation base and performing an incantation gesture with his left hand. Then he waved his finger at the location where the land mass had once stood.

After his finger fell, images rose up from the past, images that no one but Meng Hao would be able to see.

He saw the battle between himself and the Emissary, he saw himself

surrounded by the bizarre creatures. But then all of that faded away. And Meng Hao was there preparing the defenses on the land mass.

More time flowed backward. Twenty years. A hundred. Several hundred....

The land mass was floating along in the starry sky, completely unchanging. Meng Hao frowned as he saw himself passing by the location and noticing it for the first time.

More months passed. Then, something extraordinary happened, a full ten years before Meng Hao had discovered the location!

Chapter 1505: You Are The Son of Allheaven

Meng Hao could see as clear as day that ten years before he passed through this area, this land mass didn't even exist within the starry sky!

It was completely empty!!

What he saw left Meng Hao reeling. Then he watched as that spot in the starry sky suddenly began to ripple and distort. A moment later, the land mass... just appeared.

It was almost as if a huge hand had dragged it out nowhere.

His eyes flickered as Song Daozi's words echoed in his mind. Without the slightest hesitation, he began to back up. However, it was at this point that a light sigh echoed out.

"Fellow Daoist Meng, we meet again."

At the same time, the sealing mark Meng Hao had created around himself cracked and shattered into fragments. A will entered the area, crushing everything in its path.

Then he saw a woman strolling toward him. She wore violet garments, including a skirt decorated with countless glowing stars and planets. She was beautiful, and her eyes seemed to flicker like the Vast Expanse itself.

Meng Hao's eyes glittered as he said, "Han Bei!"

This woman was none other than Han Bei. However, this version of her seemed completely different than the person he had encountered recently on Planet Vast Expanse.

That version of Han Bei was enigmatic in certain ways, but was about as weak as an egg compared to him. Unfortunately, her soul was fused with Chu Yuyan's, ensuring that if she died, Chu Yuyan would also die, otherwise Meng Hao would have long since done something about her.

But this Han Bei standing in front of him seemed, not like a cultivator, but like the entire Vast Expanse. Although it was Han Bei standing there,

it was as if she were radiating the will of the entire starry sky of Allheaven, as if she were its avatar.

The Emissary of Allheaven, Song Daozi, had given him a similar feeling, although the will of Allheaven upon him had been a far cry from this. As of this moment, Han Bei seemed like the embodiment of the will of Allheaven.

It made Meng Hao feel as if, within the starry sky of Allheaven, all living beings would have no choice but to bow their heads to her. Everything would tremble in her presence, from land masses, to planets, to the countless vortexes which existed. Innumerable worlds and Realms, countless living beings, would all have the same reaction. They would all acknowledge allegiance to this embodiment of the will of Allheaven.

Everything trembled as the qi flow of the entire starry sky transformed into something like a funnel, with Han Bei resting at its very center.

The sight of it caused Meng Hao's pupils to constrict. Furthermore, he got the feeling that Han Bei hadn't only just appeared. She had most likely been there from the moment he began Soulsearhing Song Daozi.

Meng Hao's eyes shone with bright light as he looked at her. She returned his gaze, a slight smile on her face, a smile that seemed to be at harmony with the Vast Expanse, a smile that contained profound secrets.

"Enough with the mind games," Meng Hao said, waving his hand and sending cultivation base power surging. The power of the copper mirror burst out and became shocking Battle Armor. Almost simultaneously, Meng Hao's energy surged as he slashed out with the Battle Weapon.

The force of the attack ripped open the starry sky, causing rumbling sounds to echo out as the blow descended upon Han Bei. However, Han Bei did nothing to avoid the blow, and in fact continued to smile.

"The fact that you realized something strange is going on here doesn't matter. I wasn't counting on being able to keep things secret for much longer anyway." She chuckled, allowing the Battle Weapon to slash into her. However, it was almost as if she didn't even exist; the power of the Battle Weapon passed right through her, sending boundless ripples out

into the starry sky behind her.

“That won’t do you any good,” she said, shaking her head. “This isn’t my true form, just a projection. Furthermore, what has sent me here isn’t the power of my cultivation base, but rather, the almighty will of the starry sky of Allheaven.”

Meng Hao’s eyes widened, and he backed up, unleashing all the power he could muster to put distance between him and her.

Han Bei shook her head again. Smiling, she said, “You can’t escape. This is a special place which has been prepared by the almighty will of Allheaven... to harvest you.”

With that, she extended her right hand and pointed at Meng Hao.

His mind was instantly sent reeling. Unexpectedly, the starry sky around him began to spin, and no matter how he tried to flee, he ended up going to the same place!

Smiling, Han Bei said, “The reason you found this land mass to begin with was because the will of Allheaven wished it to be so. Therefore, he teleported it to a place he knew you would pass by.

“And that’s because this is one of the few weak spots in the starry sky of Allheaven. The land mass might be gone now, but the weak spot is still here, a part of the starry sky itself.

“It is only by means of this weak spot that you, someone who has yet to Transcend, can step outside of the Vast Expanse.

“Meng Hao, didn’t you want to see what it’s really like out there? All you have to do is go out from this spot, and you’ll know.” She slowly reached out and then waved her hand. The space behind her then began to distort. Then, it was as if every part of the starry sky of Allheaven, as if the will of Allheaven which existed in countless places and locations... opened an eye!

Directly behind Han Bei, the starry sky converged into a single vertical line, which then slowly opened in shocking fashion to reveal an eye, pupil and all!

It was the eye of the starry sky, an eye formed from the will of Allheaven!

As the eye opened, rumbling sounds echoed out, and everything began to tremble. Then an indescribable power exploded out from Han Bei.

That power caused everything in the area to collapse, revealing an enormous black hole.

Apparently, that black hole had been ripped open by someone countless years ago. Now that it had revealed itself, the gravitational force it could exert was astonishing.

Meng Hao trembled as that force grabbed onto him. He almost couldn't control his own body as he was dragged inexorably down toward the black hole. At the same time, a powerful force of expulsion rose up from the starry sky of Allheaven, which shoved him toward the black hole. He trembled as he began falling faster and faster.

He gritted his teeth and unleashed all the power of his cultivation base. He slashed back and forth with the Battle Weapon to try to slow down. But it did no good. He glared up at Han Bei, his eyes flickering with killing intent.

As of this point, he understood that what he was looking at was not really Han Bei, it was... the will of the starry sky of Allheaven.

"It was you!" he said, his words bursting with murder and insane hatred. "The will of Allheaven! You manipulated the Immortal God Continent and the Devil Realm Continent into destroying the Mountain and Sea Realm. All to control me and my life!" His eyes were completely bloodshot, and even the red color of his pupils grew more intense!

A tremor ran through Han Bei. Apparently, it was difficult for her to remain under the sustained control of the will of Allheaven, and yet she forced herself to endure. Looking at Meng Hao, she smiled.

"Let me ask you," she said, "how do you think the will of Allheaven is connected to you?"

Meng Hao's mind spun. He had come to realize long ago that the word 'Allheaven' had also existed in the Mountain and Sea Realm. After all, the

term 'Allheaven Clan,' contained those same characters.

He had long since come to speculate that the two were connected, but to hear the words coming out of Han Bei's mouth right now caused his eyes to widen.

"I am the Daughter of Allheaven, and you... you are the Son of Allheaven.

"Resistance is futile. In fact, you don't even qualify to resist. The will of Allheaven has bolstered my consciousness, a state that I will not be able to endure again for the next hundred years. But that doesn't matter.

"I look forward... to your return. When you appear again, you will have accepted your status as the Son of Allheaven. You will have forgotten your past. Forgotten everything. Your world will no longer be that of the Mountain and Sea Realm. There will only be... Allheaven.

"And you will become the new... Emissary of Allheaven. Perhaps you will even become... the most powerful Emissary to ever exist.

"Perhaps you will become like me, a Dao Protector to the grand will of Allheaven!" Han Bei's smile was as flirtatious as ever, but her body was clearly weakening.

Rumbling sounds filled the starry sky as Meng Hao continued to try to use the Battle Weapon to slow himself down. However, with the power of expulsion pushing him, and the gravitational force pulling at him relentlessly, he began to spin, trembling, into the depths of the black hole.

In the blink of an eye, he was swallowed up!

The black hole transformed into a spinning vortex, which gradually began to fade away. Eventually, the starry sky returned to normal. At the same time, the power of expulsion from the Vast Expanse disappeared as if it had never existed.

Light began to shine out from Han Bei, gradually turning her into glittering motes of fading splendor.

She looked at the spot where Meng Hao had been sucked away, and

continued to smile just like before. Her eyes even gleamed with anticipation.

“Meng Hao.... Son of Allheaven,” she said softly. “You grew too quickly, so quickly that even the almighty will of Allheaven was on guard. Therefore, even though the seed was not mature, it was still time for the harvest.” With that, she completely transformed into light that vanished into the darkness.

Soon, the starry sky was completely quiet and dark.

Meanwhile, back on Planet Vast Expanse, in the First Sect, Han Bei’s true form was sitting cross-legged in meditation. Suddenly, her eyes snapped open, and blood sprayed out of her mouth. She aged visibly, and her face turned completely ashen.

“For the next hundred years,” she murmured. “I must not call the will of Allheaven upon me.” With that, she looked up into the starry sky. “I truly look forward to your return. Then you and I can create a new seed here on Planet Vast Expanse.”

Chapter 1506: Cut Off Outside the Vast Expanse!

In the same moment that Meng Hao was sucked into the black hole, his clone's ninth life, the eternally blind Little Treasure, was in the middle of sculpting. Suddenly, his hand shook, and he accidentally sliced his finger with the blade. Blood began to flow.

He slowly raised his head, and a look of confusion could be seen on his face. A strange sensation flowed through him, as though a thread which had always been attached to him had suddenly been cut off.

When that happened, Little Treasure felt as if he had lost something. As he sat there silently, a gasp could be heard from off to the side. His wife rushed over and immediately staunched the flow of blood.

"What happened?" she asked. After a long moment, Little Treasure shook his head.

"Nothing," he murmured. "I just suddenly got the sensation that I'm not complete." Because he couldn't see, there was no way for him to notice that his wife's face was as ashen as his own, and she looked just as confused.

At the same time, the 9-Essences Paragons on Planet Vast Expanse, including Jin Yunshan, the Sect Leader, Immortal Bai Wuchen, and all the others, suddenly shivered. It was as if something had just flowed across them, simultaneously causing their memories of Meng Hao to suddenly grow a bit unclear.

"What just happened!?"

"Something's wrong. My memories of the Ninth Paragon seem like they might disappear at any moment...."

The Sect Leader, Jin Yunshan, and all the others were all in their secluded meditation facilities, feeling completely shaken. Similar things occurred within the Ninth Sect itself.

Far away in some other location in the starry sky of Allheaven, beneath the new 33 Heavens, many people in the Mountain and Sea Butterfly had similar reactions.

That was especially true of Xu Qing. As she sat there cross-legged, she suddenly opened her eyes and coughed up some blood. She trembled as a wave of fear rose up inside of her, completely filling her.

As of that moment, she could clearly tell that her ability to sense Meng Hao had been severed.

Her face drained of blood, and her eyes filled with grief. Smiling bitterly, she reached out to prop herself up on the nearby wall. After a long moment, her eyes filled with a resolute gleam.

“It doesn’t matter what happened, or how much time goes by,” she murmured, “I have faith... that you won’t perish.” She repeated those words over and over, both with her mouth and in her heart.

During that moment, everywhere in the starry sky of Allheaven, any person who knew or had even seen Meng Hao, all felt a deep internal transformation. Suddenly, their relationships with Meng Hao seemed to change, to lessen.

As soon as he left, all traces of him within the starry sky of Allheaven were cut. If he didn’t return within a relatively short time, then they would completely fade away. In the years to come, the people who had known him would return to the dust, and eventually, no one would remember him.

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Outside the Vast Expanse, Meng Hao opened his eyes.

His armor was gone, having once again changed into the shape of a copper mirror, which he held in his hand. When he looked out, he saw starlight, shining down from a boundless starry sky.

There was no mist, and there was no Vast Expanse. There was only the radiant starry sky, filled with one flourishing world after another.

Meng Hao gaped in shock. It felt as if some unknown fetter had been removed from his cultivation base, allowing it to surge mightily. He could also sense that this starry sky was filled with immeasurable Immortal power.

In fact, when he looked around, the first thing he thought was that everything here was pure to the ultimate degree. It was completely different from the Vast Expanse.

There was no dust, no aura of death. There was only flourishing life force; everything pulsed with a feeling that made joy rise up in one's heart.

"Why... do I feel different here than in the Vast Expanse?" Even as he hesitated in confusion, he saw a few beams of light shooting toward him through the starry sky. They were led by a middle-aged man, next to whom flew a beautiful woman who looked very anxious.

Once they could actually see Meng Hao, the woman shot into the lead position, her face filling with joy. She was the first to reach Meng Hao.

"Elder Brother, we finally found you!!" She seemed so happy that tears spilled down her cheeks as she threw herself into his arms. Meng Hao was confused, certain that he didn't even know who this person was. But then pain suddenly stabbed into his mind.

"Elder Brother, it's a good thing you and Elder Brother Chen Fan both had sealing marks placed on you by the sect back then, otherwise we might never have been able to find you.

"Oh right, Elder Brother, what exactly happened in the Arcane Pocket Realm?

"The Hundred Sects all sent Chosen into the legendary Arcane Pocket Realm of the long-since destroyed Vast Expanse. But then, a few days ago, something happened, and many of the Chosen suddenly died, and the others were forcibly teleported out." More people arrived by Meng Hao's side, and all of them seemed very concerned about him. They all started talking at the same time, causing Meng Hao's confusion to increase, and his head to hurt more.

A moment later, a memory rose up which told him that he was Meng Hao, a Chosen disciple of the Blue Sea Sect, one of the Hundred Sects that existed in this starry sky. Some time ago, he had joined a group of other various Chosen to enter an Arcane Pocket Realm.

Supposedly, it was a Realm that had been destroyed ages ago, a place known as the Vast Expanse Realm.

There were certain restrictions that limited entry, therefore the Hundred Sects had amassed a large group of Chosen to all enter at the same time.

However, something unexpected had occurred within the Vast Expanse Realm, and the majority of the Chosen had been killed. Of the group from the Blue Sea Sect, only he and his Elder Brother Chen Fan had escaped.

Apparently, it was because of Elder Brother Chen Fan that this group had been sent to rescue him.

At first, all of the memories he was recalling seemed unfamiliar, but as soon as he heard the name Chen Fan, everything suddenly seemed to make sense.

“Where’s Elder Brother Chen Fan?” he asked.

The person to answer the question was the middle-aged man, who looked at Meng Hao kindly as he said, “Your Elder Brother Chen Fan was already taken back to the sect. Hao’er, do you remember everything that happened in the Arcane Pocket Realm?”

Meng Hao looked over at the man and somehow recalled that this was his Master. In response to the man’s words, Meng Hao thought back to everything which had occurred inside, and once again, stabs of pain wracked his mind. Blue veins even popped out on his face.

“Never mind,” the man said. He sighed. “Just try not to think about it. Your Elder Brother Chen Fan experienced the same thing. In fact, so did all of the Chosen who made it out alive.” With that, he flicked his sleeve, leading Meng Hao and everyone else off into the distance.

As they proceeded along, the woman continued to support Meng Hao. She seemed very concerned about him, so much so that she didn’t mind if

everyone saw them being so physically close to each other. At first, Meng Hao felt that it was somewhat inappropriate, but then his memories told him that this woman was his beloved Daoist partner, and also the daughter of his Master. They had been married for a long time, and even had a son.

“No. Something doesn’t seem right....” Meng Hao’s head hurt more than ever, and his eyes flickered with confusion. After some time passed, the group reached the sect itself.

The Blue Sea Sect was located on a planet that Meng Hao found to be both familiar and unfamiliar.

As soon as he arrived, numerous fellow sect members saw him, and expressions of delight appeared on their faces. They began to rush over, and soon a crowd had formed that escorted him back to his home. There, he saw a young boy about seven or eight years old, who called him “daddy” and rushed over to hug him.

All of it seemed very unfamiliar, but then there was that name Chen Fan, which somehow made everything seem correct.

“No, this is definitely wrong. Something’s not right....” His head throbbed, and off to the side, his Daoist partner and his son looked at him with anxious expressions.

He forced a smile onto his face, and after uttering some reassuring words, he sat down cross-legged. Frowning, he thought back to everything he remembered from his life. His father was an Elder in the sect, and he himself had been born with extraordinary latent talent. After officially joining the sect, he instantly became a Chosen. He progressed rapidly, and by this point his cultivation base was already at the peak Ancient realm, just a step away from the full circle.

His wife was the daughter of his Master, and the two of them were childhood sweethearts. When they got married a few years ago, it led to widespread envy among their peers.

“No, that’s not right....” he thought, shaking his head. He subconsciously performed an incantation gesture and pushed down on his stomach.

“Eighth Hex!”

Nothing happened. He looked down in surprise, unsure of exactly why he had said the words “Eighth Hex.” Next, he looked through his bag of holding. Everything inside seemed unfamiliar, except for....

A copper mirror.

“What’s this?” he thought, surprised. Then he remembered that after awakening earlier, he had been clutching this very mirror.

“Could it be something I picked up in the Arcane Pocket Realm?” He took out the copper mirror and studied it for a moment. The familiar feeling once again appeared, although it was somewhat different than before.

This world seemed unfamiliar, and everyone in it seemed like strangers, and yet there was also something familiar to it as well. His memories seemed strange, but this copper mirror was different. Within all of the unfamiliarity, it seemed very familiar, as if it were something very important to him.

“Just what exactly is going on...?” he blurted. For some reason, he was starting to get agitated, so much so that his wife took his son out of the room and left him alone.

After some time passed, his eyes were bloodshot. He reached up and struck his forehead with a glancing blow. In that exact moment, a knock could be heard on the door, and a worried voice spoke out.

“Little Junior Brother, I’m coming in.” The door opened, and a young man walked in who somehow radiated an ancient feeling. He looked at Meng Hao, mixed emotions on his face, as if he were thinking about the past.

Meng Hao looked up, and recognized the young man, as though he existed, not just in his surface memories, but somewhere deep inside his mind.

“Elder Brother Chen Fan....”

Chapter 1507: Can't Tell Clearly

The person who had come to visit him was none other than Chen Fan!

The confusion in Meng Hao's eyes grew. There wasn't the least bit of unfamiliarity to this Chen Fan. Quite the opposite. Meng Hao was sure that he knew him. Not only did he exist in Meng Hao's memories, he also had a place deep within his intuition.

As Chen Fan walked in and sat down cross-legged in front of him, Meng Hao felt stabbing pain in his head. Within his mind, Chen Fan was like a drop of water falling into a pot of boiling oil.

The resulting explosion caused random, scattered memories to flit through Meng Hao's mind. They were like a cyclone that roared through his thoughts, none of them connected, and yet all of them featuring Chen Fan.

They were like memories from another life, and they left Meng Hao trembling, his eyes bloodshot. Demonic qi roared, and finally, he clenched his hands into fists and roared, unleashing the power of his cultivation base. That power was definitely not the power of the Ancient Realm, it was the peak of the 9-Essences level.

Although the room was being destroyed around them, Chen Fan wasn't affected at all. He leaned forward, grabbed Meng Hao by the shoulders, and shouted, "Little Junior Brother!!"

Meng Hao began to pant, staring at Chen Fan, chaos raging within him. Not only was he bewildered by what was going on, he felt as if there were a voice inside of him yelling something at him, something he couldn't quite make out.

As Meng Hao's cultivation base erupted out, the entire sect was shaken, and countless individuals flew over anxiously.

"Little Junior Brother, wake up!!" Chen Fan roared.

"None of that is real! Everything you experienced in the Vast Expanse Realm was an illusion!!"

“You are back in the real world now. The Vast Expanse Realm is just an Arcane Pocket Realm, the ruins of a place which died ages and ages ago!”

Chen Fan’s shouting grew louder, and it eventually pierced its way into Meng Hao’s mind. Meng Hao was panting even harder than before, and his eyes were crimson. More and more memories were flying about in his mind.

In one moment, he was experiencing familiar sensations in an unfamiliar world. The next moment, he was experiencing unfamiliar sensations in a familiar world. It made it impossible for him tell clearly what was real.

“Not real?” he asked hoarsely. He didn’t recognize his own voice, as if it weren’t even him speaking. It sounded hoarse and grating, like metal rubbing against rock.

“Not real!” Chen Fan replied. “It was all a fantasy we experienced in the Vast Expanse Arcane Pocket Realm. You’re not the only one to go through this. I had the same feelings. In fact, everyone who escaped from the Arcane Pocket Realm had the same experience.”

He clasped Meng Hao by the shoulders and anxiously continued: “A big group from the Hundred Sects went into the Arcane Pocket Realm together. Who would have ever guessed that as soon as we entered, we were sucked into a fantasy? Of course, there were upsides. For example, both you and I were able to find our own path of cultivation within the confusing fantasy.”

The bewilderment in Meng Hao’s eyes grew more intense. He believed Chen Fan, but deep inside, there was something shouting at him, and he couldn’t shake the feeling that something was off.

“I remember a woman,” Meng Hao blurted subconsciously. “She—”

“Was her name Xu Qing?” Chen Fan interrupted. Meng Hao’s jaw dropped. As soon as the name Xu Qing entered his mind, a tremor ran through him. The expression of struggle on his face grew more intense; it felt as if he were stuck in a nightmare.

“Think carefully,” Chen Fan said, “and you’ll realize that the Xu Qing you are thinking about is exactly the same as Xu Qing from the Dao of Water Sect, right? Junior Brother, you were in a relationship with Xu Qing from the Dao of Water Sect, but in the end, she chose the path of Immortality, not you.” As Chen Fan spoke, memories rose up within Meng Hao’s mind. He suddenly remembered that Xu Qing had been a fellow disciple of the Blue Sea Sect. However, because of various circumstances, she ended up defecting to another sect, and severing any connections she had to him.

“No,” Meng Hao murmured. “There’s also Fatty and Wang Youcai. What about my dad and mom, and my sister? What about Sun Hai and my Master, Pill Demon...?” However, as more memories appeared in his mind, he had to admit that he saw images of everyone he had just mentioned.

Virtually all of them were cultivators from the Hundred Sects, the same ones who had gone into the Vast Expanse Arcane Pocket Realm.

“Was it really all just an illusion...?” Meng Hao murmured bitterly.

Chen Fan nodded, mixed emotions flickering within his eyes.

“Little Junior Brother,” he said softly, gripping Meng Hao’s shoulders, “you were stuck within the Arcane Pocket Realm of the Vast Expanse Realm for far longer than me. That’s why you’re so much more confused, and also why it will take you longer to fully awaken.

“I had the same suspicions as you when I first awoke. I had many confusing impulses, and felt as if I didn’t want to awaken. I even tried to get back into the Vast Expanse Arcane Pocket Realm.

“Other people might not understand what you’re feeling right now, but your Elder Brother does!” Chen Fan seemed very earnest as he looked at Meng Hao, and his expression was one of deep care.

Meng Hao maintained his silence, and yet his eyes seemed more confused than ever. He didn’t want to believe what he was being told, and yet everything around him seemed so real. He could see the images of the people around him within his memories. That was especially true of his wife, who had always cared about him even when he was infatuated with

Xu Qing.

And then there was his son, his own flesh and blood. Via divine sense, he could tell that the blood pumping through the boy's veins was the same as his own.

Most real of all was Chen Fan.

"But," he muttered, "the Mountain and S—" Before he could finish, Chen Fan interrupted him.

"Enough!" he said, his grip on Meng Hao's shoulders tightening, tears welling up in his eyes. "Little Junior Brother, you need to wake up. All of that was an illusion. I know that you were just about to bring up the Mountain and Sea Realm. That's because the first place we all ended up in after going into the Vast Expanse Arcane Pocket Realm was the ruins of the Mountain and Sea Realm.

"Both of us got sucked into the same place. I remember the Mountain and Sea Realm too, as well as the Reliance Sect. Back then, I was your Elder Brother, right?!"

Meng Hao took a deep breath and looked up at Chen Fan.

"It was an illusion, all of it," Chen Fan said. "The Mountain and Sea Realm wasn't destroyed in our time, that happened long, long ago. Many years in the past, the Vast Expanse Realm really did exist, and inside of it, there was also a Mountain and Sea Realm. But the people who lived there were not you and me!

"It was all a dream, a dream of Mountains and Seas. We were taken back into ancient times, and that had a big impact on all of us." Every word spoken by Chen Fan was like a bolt of lightning striking Meng Hao's mind. "Stop thinking about it. It was all an illusion. What you see around you is reality."

"This is all real?" Meng Hao murmured. Bitterly, he closed his eyes. His head hurt, and every time he tried to think about the Vast Expanse, it felt like he was being stabbed to the bone.

"This is all real!" Chen Fan replied earnestly. If anyone else had tried to

convince him, Meng Hao wouldn't have believed them. But this was Chen Fan, and both in the clear memories, and the vague ones, he remembered that his Eldest Brother always took care of him.

Meng Hao smiled bitterly, and then took a long breath. "Elder Brother, I understand. I sank into a dream of the Vast Expanse Realm, and it was so realistic that now I'm having trouble telling the difference between what is real and what is not."

Meng Hao's eyes were bloodshot, and he seemed older than before, exhausted.

"Just give me some peace and quiet, and I'll be fine," he said quietly.

Chen Fan looked at him, patted his shoulder, then rose to his feet.

"Get some rest, and always remember that this place... is real. You are not Meng Hao from the Mountain and Sea Realm. You are the Scion disciple of the Blue Sea Sect, from outside the Vast Expanse. Meng Hao, you are a Chosen from the Hundred Sects of the Vast Expanse Cosmos."

Meng Hao nodded bitterly. However, there was something that no one could possibly know, which was that the copper mirror inside of his bag holding was sending a hot current of energy into Meng Hao. It swirled around inside of him as he closed his eyes, slowly calming him. The surrounding members of his sect finally breathed sighs of relief, although they still continued to look at him with caring concern.

Chen Fan looked deeply at Meng Hao, then turned and left, looking completely exhausted. After he was gone, Meng Hao's wife and son returned, looking very anxious and worried. The boy lingered off to the side, looking a bit scared, as though his father was a stranger.

"It's fine," Meng Hao said, opening his eyes. "Don't worry." He forced a smile onto his face.

A few days passed. During that time, numerous fellow disciples came to offer greetings. Most of them seemed to care for him, but there were also some who secretly wished that he had died in the Vast Expanse Arcane Pocket Realm.

Within Meng Hao's memories, he didn't recall seeing those people act in such a way, but now, all it took was a look, and he could sense their true feelings.

His Master came, as did other Senior members of the sect. All of them asked a few questions here and there, and left him with some encouraging words.

Chen Fan came to visit several times. Each time he would sit cross-legged in front of Meng Hao and chat, helping him to remember things from the Blue Sea Sect and the Vast Expanse Cosmos.

Whenever they talked about the Vast Expanse Arcane Pocket Realm, they would sigh.

Meng Hao gradually came to accept his identity, although confusion continued to lurk deep within him.

A month later, when everyone believed Meng Hao to have fully recovered, he was sitting there cross-legged on one rainy night, looking at his wife, when he suddenly stood and walked out into the rain. Deep in his eyes, confusion blossomed.

Within the rain was a stiff wind which lifted his hair up as it whistled through the trees of the courtyard.

"Is this place actually... real?" he thought.

"How come I just can't forget everything that happened in the Vast Expanse Arcane Pocket Realm? There are so many faces I can't forget, and I can't stop thinking about the Mountain and Sea Realm...." He reached his hand out, and as the freezing rain fell onto his palm, it felt like he was being stabbed to the bone.

Chapter 1508: Vast Expanse Society

After feeling the raindrops hit his hand for a while, his eyes shone with determination. "I need to go back to the Vast Expanse Arcane Pocket Realm and see for myself. If I don't, my heart will never be able to rest at ease!"

He didn't speak the words aloud to anyone. Instead, he spun, transforming into a beam of light that shot off into the distance.

Back in their house, his wife had just opened her eyes, and they shone with bitterness. She sighed. In recent days, she'd gotten the feeling that her husband was somewhat aloof, to the point where... he almost didn't seem at all like her husband.

Meanwhile, on a certain mountain in the Blue Sea Sect, Chen Fan was also standing out in the rain. He seemed to be thinking about the past, and within his eyes flickered guilt and other emotions. Eventually, he caught sight of Meng Hao flying up into the air. He almost stepped forward to interfere, but then held back.

"It doesn't matter," he muttered to himself. "Go search for the truth, and maybe you'll find it." As he closed his eyes, a woman approached, who gently wrapped her arms around him from behind.

Chen Fan's eyes turned warm. Slipping around to face her, he reached up and caressed her cheek.

She smiled kindly, then looked off into the distance, seemingly worried.

"Your little Junior Brother..."

"It's fine," Chen Fan said softly. "Let him look for his answers. Perhaps he'll find what he's looking for."

"What about you? Did you find the answers? From what I can tell, it's going to take Meng Hao a lot longer to get back to normal than you did." According to the woman's memories, Chen Fan had recovered rather quickly, which was confusing to her. In sharp contrast, Meng Hao had already been back for a month, and yet was still lost in confusion.

Chen Fan shook his head and pulled the woman up against his chest. “He was inside for longer than me. Most importantly, I had you. As soon as I laid eyes on you... I had my answer.”

He held her tightly, almost as if he feared that he would lose her forever if he let go.

The rain continued to fall even harder than before. Meng Hao was a bright beam of light that shot up into the Heavens. Soon, he reached the border of the sky itself, beyond the clouds. There was no rain here. He kept flying, shooting out from within the sky of the planet, where he felt himself being restrained by a protective spell formation.

He pulled a jade slip out of his bag of holding, and after the spell formation scanned it, it gradually released him. Without pausing for a moment, Meng Hao proceeded onward. Soon, he was out within the starry sky itself.

Surrounding him was nothing but glittering starlight. There was none of the mist that filled the Vast Expanse Arcane Pocket Realm. Everything was bright and clear, and the energy of Heaven and Earth was abundant.

His eyes flickered as he checked his cultivation base. At the moment, he only had one Soul Lamp which remained lit. His cultivation base was at the peak of the Ancient Realm.

After some thought, he became certain that the current level of his cultivation base was definitely different from what it had been in his vague memories. And yet, there were some things about it that seemed the same. However, there was no way to truly contemplate it. Over the past days, he had come to realize that if he tried to recollect certain things, it would cause splitting pain in his head and send his cultivation base into chaos.

He sighed, and his eyes flickered with determination and focus. Following the information which existed in his clear memories, he headed in the direction of the Vast Expanse Arcane Pocket Realm.

“I have to find some answers!” he thought, flying along at top speed. A few months later, after passing through multiple teleportation portals, he

was about halfway to his destination.

The days of flying were draining his cultivation base, and yet he didn't consume any medicinal pills, nor did he perform any breathing exercises to absorb the energy of Heaven and Earth.

At a certain point, after enough of his cultivation base was drained, a warm current suddenly began to flow through him, originating in his chest. That current restored his cultivation base almost instantly.

Meng Hao was instantly enlivened, and rubbed his bag of holding, a strange look gleaming in his eyes.

During the months of travel, he produced the copper mirror on more than one occasion to study it. Although he never discovered anything in particular about it, he could sense the pulses of warmth coming out of it and flowing into his body. Although that energy seemed to vanish inside of him, he felt no sense of danger from it, and in fact, it made him feel happy.

For some reason, he eventually took the copper mirror out and hung it around his neck where it could touch his skin, and allowed the current to flow out from it into his body. It was almost as if it were trying to awaken something. Because of that sensation, Meng Hao would occasionally slip into somewhat of a daze. His eyesight would swim, and after a moment, everything would turn back to normal, and yet he continued to have the sensation that he was being yelled at, although he couldn't hear it clearly.

Most importantly, because of that flow, he didn't have any need to absorb energy from the starry sky. It always ensured that his cultivation base remained in top condition.

The result was that, from the moment he awakened in this starry sky, to the moment he returned to the Blue Sea Sect, to his current situation of flying through the starry sky, he had never consumed any medicinal pills or absorbed any of the local energy of Heaven and Earth.

Although he wasn't sure exactly why, he had the feeling that doing things that way was the best for him.

He patted the copper mirror hanging over his chest, and felt even more sure than ever that he needed to get back to the Vast Expanse Arcane Pocket Realm. That was where he would get his answers. He continued ever onward.

The Vast Expanse Arcane Pocket Realm was actually quite a long ways away from the Blue Sea Sect, seemingly at the border of the entire Vast Expanse Cosmos. As he journeyed onward, he ran into quite a few cultivators, as well as numerous heavenly bodies.

At the moment, he was nearing the Dao of Water Sect.

He was hoping to take advantage of their teleportation portal to get closer to the Vast Expanse Society. The Vast Expanse Society was where he would be able to make his last teleportation, getting him very close to the Vast Expanse Arcane Pocket Realm.

“The Vast Expanse Society,” he murmured. “That name sounds so familiar....” His clear memories were telling him that the Vast Expanse Society was one of the Hundred Sects of the Vast Expanse Cosmos, and in fact, was one of the top three most powerful sects in the entire organization.

It was a mysterious sect, which was constantly locked down by swirling mists that prevented its disciples from leaving the sect. However, when other sects wished to use their teleportation portal, all that was required was enough Immortal jade, and they would have access.

There were stories about the Vast Expanse Society in Meng Hao’s memories. Supposedly, they had earned the disfavor of the exalted Allheaven, who, in his wrath, had sealed their sect with mist, almost like a curse.

“The exalted Allheaven....” Meng Hao suddenly stopped in place and began to search through his memories for information about the exalted Allheaven.

Allheaven was the guardian of the Vast Expanse Cosmos, a supreme entity who had supposedly created the entire place to begin with.

All sects offered wholehearted worship to statues of Allheaven, and according to the legends, the very energy of Heaven and Earth that cultivators used in their cultivation, was actually power from the exalted Allheaven.

Everything in existence, all living beings, were the people of Allheaven.

From generation to generation, for countless years, it had always been that way....

Within the Hundred Sects of the Vast Expanse Cosmos, being Chosen was not the ultimate glory. Only by acquiring the title 'Son of Allheaven' could one truly be considered doted upon by the world. A person with that title was a Chosen among Chosen!

"There is only one Son of Allheaven during a given period of time," Meng Hao thought. "Sometimes one every 10,000 years, sometimes one every 1,000 years. To date, there have been ninety-eight Sons of Allheaven, cultivators who have been blessed by the exalted Allheaven himself. It is only by cultivating the Dao of Allheaven that one can be doted upon by the world, to be worshiped by all cultivators, to be respected by all sects!" Meng Hao was panting. For some reason, after the memories became clear, he realized that he felt intensely opposed to the title 'Son of Allheaven'.

Shaking his head, he cleared his thoughts and proceeded along his way. Ten days later, he saw a planet up ahead of him in the starry sky.

It was blue, and it was just possible to determine that it was covered with water. It looked beautiful, and seemed to be teeming with life force.

"The Dao of Water Sect...." Meng Hao murmured. As he neared, he couldn't stop his heart from pounding as he remembered that a woman name Xu Qing lived here.

In his vague memories, he remembered being married to someone in the Mountain and Sea Realm who was just like her. At the moment, it was hard to get a grip on his thoughts, and also hard to tell whether or not he wished this place to be real or not.

If it was real, and he saw Xu Qing, then Xu Qing would be real. But if it wasn't real, then his heart would be filled with regret and bitterness.

It was with such complicated thoughts and feelings that Meng Hao drew ever closer to the Dao of Water Sect.

Their teleportation portal was not accessible to just anyone. Only members of the Hundred Sects were allowed access.

A stream of divine sense blocked Meng Hao's path, but when he pulled out his Blue Sea Sect identification medallion, a disciple flew out and looked him over. Before he could say anything, the disciple asked, "You want to use the teleportation portal to go to the Vast Expanse Society, and then the Vast Expanse Arcane Pocket Realm. Am I right?"

Meng Hao's eyes glittered, and he nodded. The disciple from the Dao of Water Sect sighed.

"I really don't know what the deal is with that Vast Expanse Arcane Pocket Realm. You're not the first person to pass through here, you know. Lots of people have been trying to get to the Vast Expanse Arcane Pocket Realm." The disciple led Meng Hao down onto the planet itself, to a location where a spell formation had been set up above the surface of the water.

Meng Hao paid the tax, and as he waited for the spell formation to activate, he hesitated for a moment, then clasped hands to the disciple from the Dao of Water Sect.

"Fellow Daoist," he said, "may I ask... is Xu Qing in the sect?"

"Elder Sister Xu?" The disciple looked over at him. Realizing that there was something familiar about him, he studied him for a moment, then recognized him and laughed.

"Ah, I thought you looked familiar. So it's Fellow Daoist Meng from the Blue Sea Sect." Apparently he knew all about the things which had occurred between Meng Hao and Xu Qing.

"If you want to see Elder Sister Xu, then you'll have to wait a bit. She usually comes to the teleportation portal around this time of day on her

way to the East Sea to harvest Heavenwater Pearls for her cultivation.”

Chapter 1509: Following the Crowd

Meng Hao clasped hands in thanks. After a moment, he decided not to step into the spell formation. Instead, he stood off to the side, waiting.

After about an hour passed, the disciples in charge of operating the spell formation were about to completely lose patience, when a beam of light appeared in the sky off in the distance.

“It’s Elder Sister Xu!” Looks of awe and veneration appeared in the eyes of the nearby disciples, and they all clasped hands in greeting.

Meng Hao looked up at the woman in the beam of light. She wore white garments, and although she wasn’t spectacularly beautiful, was pretty and emanated an indescribable air. She seemed a bit cold, but wasn’t the completely unapproachable type.

Meng Hao looked at her, trembling. Suddenly, she slowed to a stop and looked down at him. Their gazes met.

Time seemed to stop. Xu Qing hovered there quietly, and instead of proceeding along on her way, she floated down toward the teleportation portal. The disciples from the Dao of Water Sect clasped hands respectfully as she landed in front of Meng Hao.

She looked coldly at Meng Hao, and from her expression, it seemed as if she had no connection to him whatsoever other than being a former acquaintance.

“Have you recovered?” Meng Hao asked suddenly.

“I was confused for a few days,” she replied coolly, “but I can already tell the difference between reality and illusion.”

After a moment, Meng Hao smiled and said, “Congratulations.”

With that, he turned and stepped onto the spell formation.

It was at that point that Xu Qing spoke again. “Have you been well recently?”

He turned and looked back at her. “By recently, do you mean in the

Arcane Pocket Realm, or... in the Vast Expanse Cosmos?”

“You were inside the Vast Expanse Arcane Pocket Realm for a long time. Everything there was nothing more than a dream. Meng Hao, stop living in the illusion. It’s time to wake up.

“The reason I came down to speak to you is that I have some news. The will of the exalted Allheaven will soon select the ninety-ninth generation Son of Allheaven. It will happen this year, and if you become the Son of Allheaven, then perhaps things can continue between us as they were meant to. However, considering the way you’re acting now, I have the feeling that won’t happen.” She shook her head, gave him one last look, and then was gone.

Meng Hao stood in the spell formation as it activated, watching her leave. He could sense her coldness, and suddenly began to laugh. His laughter grew louder and louder as the spell formation rumbled, and then he vanished.

When he reappeared in the starry sky, he was still laughing. He laughed and laughed until the laughter turned into coughing. A glint of madness could be seen in his eyes.

“Have I recovered? Chen Fan recovered. Xu Qing recovered. Everything that happened in the Vast Expanse Arcane Pocket Realm is just a dream? I don’t believe it! Why do I have this pain in my heart? She’s not Xu Qing!

“She’s not...

“She’s not...

“She’s not!” Meng Hao threw his head back and laughed uproariously, his eyes glowing red. At the same time, the void around him distorted as countless invisible threads formed. They began to creep toward Meng Hao, as if to take advantage of his current state to bore into his eyes, ears, nose, and mouth.

But then, all of a sudden, the copper mirror hanging on his chest sent a flowing current through him that was far hotter than before. It filled him, causing him to shudder and then calm down. The threads which had

surrounded him then shrank back and vanished.

Meng Hao's mood gradually stabilized, and his eyes shone with a bright light. Something definitely felt wrong. His mood had changed too suddenly after encountering Xu Qing, and now that he thought back, he realized that he had seemed out of control, as if something were attempting to influence him.

He looked around, eyes narrowed, then flashed into motion, heading toward the Vast Expanse Society.

A few days later, he was in front of a huge planet, a planet that vastly exceeded the planets of the Dao of Water Sect and the Blue Sea Sect in size.

It was covered with swirling mists, making it impossible to see its surface. However, there was a satellite planet next to the main planet, which was where the teleportation portal was located.

Meng Hao looked at the planet that was the Vast Expanse Society, and the stabbing pain in his mind caused him to shake his head. He headed to the satellite planet, then entered the teleportation portal, and was gone.

A few days later, he finally arrived... at his final destination, the Vast Expanse Arcane Pocket Realm!

It was an enormous vortex which spun endlessly, sending intense rumbling sounds echoing out in all directions. Countless asteroids floated about in the area, upon which numerous cultivators could be seen, all of whom were closely studying the vortex.

Meng Hao looked at the vortex, and his mind spun. He flew onward, toward the vortex, and quite a few people noticed him and looked over.

He ignored them, keeping his eyes fixed on the vortex itself. Panting, he flew directly toward it, not pausing for even a moment.

Soon, he could hear people calling out, but he didn't pay them any heed. Then, even as he neared, he suddenly bounced off of an invisible barrier, a sealing power which prevented people from casually entering the vortex.

A boom echoed out as Meng Hao was rebuffed. He coughed up a mouthful of blood as he was sent flying back. When he looked up at the barrier, the vague memories inside of him sent so much pain stabbing into his mind that his face paled.

It was at this point that Meng Hao heard someone speak his name. “Meng Hao?”

The owner of the voice seemed uncertain. Meng Hao turned and saw a fat fellow, expression quizzical. When their eyes met, he smiled wryly.

“It really is you. I’m Li Fugui! Oh, right, maybe you don’t recognize me. We were good friends in the Vast Expanse Arcane Pocket Realm.” The fat man sighed and looked sympathetically at Meng Hao.

“The fact that you’ve come here shows that you still haven’t recovered. It was only recently that I myself was finally able to think clearly. I hope you can recover soon. Don’t try to get back inside, by the way. We’ve all tried, and it’s useless. The exalted Allheaven has sealed it up tight.”

Meng Hao looked at the man standing in front of him. Within his vague memories was another Fatty who looked almost exactly the same as this one.

“You’ve recovered too....” Meng Hao said, smiling bitterly.

“Yeah. Not just me. Remember Chu Yuyan, Sun Hai, and Wang Youcai? They’ve all recovered.” Even as he spoke, he turned and waved his hand. A few beams of light appeared off in the distance, as familiar figures from his vague memories flew over.

There were Wang Youcai, Sun Hai, and... Chu Yuyan.

Sighing, the three of them looked at Meng Hao, as if they were also recalling everything which had occurred within the Vast Expanse Arcane Pocket Realm. That was especially true of Chu Yuyan, whose expression was hard to read as she looked at Meng Hao. It almost seemed as if she couldn’t believe what had happened inside, as if it were impossible that she would become infatuated with Meng Hao.

“You know what?” Fatty said. “We’re all Chosen from the Hundred Sects,

and I think that since we all became friends in a dream, we might as well do the same thing in the real world!" He laughed.

"All of you recovered already?" Meng Hao asked.

Sun Hai nodded his head, as did everyone else. The sympathy in their eyes was clear.

"We've all recovered," Sun Hai said. "Everyone did.... You know, you should go spend some time with some of the others. After all, we all were connected by destiny within the dream. Oh right, in the illusion, Fang Yu was your sister." Sun Hai sighed.

Meng Hao's mind was reeling. He looked around at all of the asteroids, at the dozens of people there, and every one of the faces was familiar. In fact, one of them belonged to his older sister Fang Yu.

He saw his parents, his Master Pill Demon, Taiyang Zi, Li Ling'er, Fan Dong'er, and Zhixiang....

Head pounding, he followed Fatty around to go meet everyone, all of these people who existed in his memories. When they laid eyes on him, they sighed, and spoke emotionally of the things which had happened in the dream world.

A few days later, Meng Hao had gone to talk to everyone. Finally, he sat down on an asteroid and stared blankly at the sealed vortex. Everyone here had already recovered. Meng Hao was the only one who was still confused.

He suddenly felt very alone. The perplexity he was experiencing led him to question himself. If one person tried to convince him that what he had experienced was an illusory dream, he would never question himself. But it wasn't a single person. It was two, three, ten, a hundred. Countless people were all telling him the same thing, and as such, he couldn't help but question himself.

"Don't tell me... it really was all a dream...?" he murmured.

"Of course it was," Fatty said. He sat down next to Meng Hao on the asteroid. Taking a deep breath, he handed a flagon of alcohol over to Meng Hao. He held a flagon of his own, from which he took a long swig.

The vortex continued to spin. Although they were located somewhere far out in the starry sky, it didn't feel any different than if they were sitting on a planet.

Meng Hao held the alcohol flagon in his hand. Instead of drinking, he sat there quietly for a while, and then began to chuckle bitterly.

"Ah well, I guess it doesn't matter...." He said, shaking his head. At the moment, the copper mirror hanging at his chest was sending out so much heat it was burning his skin. And yet, he didn't seem to notice. He raised the flagon up to take a drink. Because the flagon covered his eyes, he had no way to notice that everyone in the area, Fatty, Sun Hai, Wang Youcai, Chu Yuyan, Li Ling'er, Fatty, and even his parents and Pill Demon... were all looking at him, watching, waiting for him to take a drink!

And that was when something completely unexpected happened!

Chapter 1510: Strange Occurrences!

Just when Meng Hao was about to place the flagon on his lips and take a drink, a beam of light appeared off in the distance, approaching with shocking speed. Its target was apparently not Meng Hao, but the vortex that made up the Vast Expanse Arcane Pocket Realm.

As soon as Meng Hao saw that beam of light, he shot to his feet. It was a middle-aged man with disheveled hair. Despite his appearance, he radiated an air of imposing dignity. He moved with incredible speed, almost instantly slamming into the barrier that protected the Vast Expanse Arcane Pocket Realm.

A boom rang out, and everything shook. The man coughed up some blood. Eyes bloodshot, he threw his head back and laughed uproariously.

“You’ve sealed the Vast Expanse so no one can enter? Blocked the way? Fine!

“I’ve been dead for ages, but I’ve always done things my own way. You think you can project my soul here and force me to deceive my foster son? I’m afraid... that won’t be happening!” The man continued to laugh, then suddenly turned to look at Meng Hao.

When Meng Hao saw who it was, his mind began to spin with shock.

“Dad....” he cried involuntarily.

This middle-aged man was not his birth father Fang Xiufeng, but rather, his foster father, Paragon of the Ancient Demon Immortal Sect in the Ninth Mountain and Sea... Ke Yunhai!

They had met within true spirit Night’s memory of ancient times, a place Meng Hao originally thought was all an illusion, but turned out to have affected the real world.

Back then, Ke Yunhai knew that Meng Hao wasn’t his son Jiusi, and yet loved him anyway! That was the first time in his life he had ever felt fatherly love.

The memories exploded within Meng Hao’s mind, becoming clearer by

the moment. He trembled as his vision suddenly swam.

Ke Yunhai looked over at him and smiled warmly. Laughing, he said, “Hao’er, you need to see things clearly. Everything here is a sham. If I die, I can prove this place is definitely a trick. If I don’t die, then it would equally prove that this is a trick to deceive you. Because I... already died long ago!” Ke Yunhai spun in place, and as Meng Hao looked on, trembling, he slammed his head into the barrier. He moved with incredible speed, drawing fully upon his own life energy. A huge boom echoed out. As he hit the barrier, the barrier struck back with shocking power to stop him.

In that moment, he called out, “Hao’er, my foster son. Remember that the Heavenly Dao has a flaw. There is nothing perfect in the world, and nothing can be without blemish. All of this is in your heart!

“Everyone here said that I couldn’t see things clearly. That was true. But I would still prefer to die to give you a chance to see the truth!”

Power slammed into Ke Yunhai, and he was instantly shredded into a mass of blood and gore that splashed out in all directions.

He used his death to reveal the truth!

He used his death to give Meng Hao a chance to pierce through the veil of lies!

He used his death to prove that he was right!

Meng Hao threw down the alcohol flagon. Power raged within him as he looked at the spot where Ke Yunhai had died in a haze of blood. The words he had spoken caused Meng Hao to tremble. His eyes turned red, and his aura erupted.

“Dad....” he said, trembling, tears streaming down his face. Moments ago, he had been ready to give in. That attitude instantly vanished. His doubts regarding the world he was in instantly grew stronger. He began to pant and shake, and as he stared at the blood mist, and thought about Ke Yunhai, more tears flowed.

His mind felt like it was about to explode from the countless strands of thought which were lurking hidden therein. It was as if those thoughts

were about to flood out to fill every part of his being. Suddenly, light began to shine out from within him, and yet at the same time, a pressure appeared in the local starry sky.

That pressure arrived without any warning, and completely enveloped Meng Hao. It suppressed him, as well as the countless thoughts that seemed to be on the verge of forming.

The power of awakening and the power of the pressure were using his body as a battleground. Blood sprayed out of Meng Hao's mouth, and he staggered in place as his thoughts were crushed.

He looked down, his face pale, at his chest, which now was wracked with stabbing pain. The copper mirror was sending a flowing current into him, filling his body, causing him to pant. He looked up, eyes bright red.

Numerous sighs could be heard, as everyone, including Fatty, looked on with complicated expressions.

"I never would have thought that Ke Yunhai would have the hardest time waking up, and not Meng Hao...."

"Yeah, that's right. That's what happens when you don't recover, when you can't tell the difference between reality and fantasy...."

At this point, just about everyone began talking to Meng Hao.

"Meng Hao, did you see that? He went crazy. You can't let yourself stay confused. Everything in the Vast Expanse was an illusion, a dream."

"If you don't pull yourself together, you'll end up like that! Your mind will shatter!"

"Meng Hao, wake up!"

"Meng Hao, why can't you see things clearly? That guy, whoever he was, was stuck in the dream for too long, and thus couldn't face up to reality. I know you, and I can tell that you were close to him somehow, but you can't let that affect you!"

"Meng Hao, all the relationships and friendships from the dream weren't real! You have to wake up to reality!"

Meng Hao's mind felt as if it were spinning; the battle between the awakening memories and the suppressing pressure reached a boiling point, and finally, he looked up and shouted, "Shut up!"

His words echoed out like thunder. Suddenly, the aura of the 9-Essences level exploded out, filling the area. Meng Hao clutched his head in his hands, then roared.

"Shut up!"

"Shut up!!

"SHUT UP!!!"

He threw his head back and howled, creating a sonic attack that mixed with the power of the 9-Essences level. Rumbling filled the area as the sound wave swept out, transforming countless asteroids into nothing but ash. Numerous figures, never having imagined that Meng Hao would unleash an explosive attack like this, were battered by the sound wave, shaking violently until they exploded.

Fatty, Chu Yuyan, Li Ling'er, Fan Dong'er, Fang Yu, Sun Hai.... One figure after another from Meng Hao's memories were eradicated.

The instant they died, the air distorted, as if a roar of rage was rippling through the area, as if the source of that roar had been completely unaware that Meng Hao would do something like this.

Everything in the area vanished. Meng Hao coughed up some more blood. Hair disheveled, he looked around at the void, and the ash that was the remnants of the dead. Then he began to chuckle hoarsely, a laughter that rapidly turned more and more bitter.

He looked over at the barrier which sealed off the vortex, and began to fly toward it.

"My death will prove whether or not this is a trick!" His head throbbed as his bitter laughter echoed out. In the blink of an eye, he had reached the barrier. Boom!

Instantly, a Heaven-shaking, Earth-shattering power blasted back against

him, send him flying. His bones were crushed, and his flesh was shredded.

And yet, he didn't die....

He struggled to right himself, and once again shot toward the barrier. It was at this point that an enraged roar echoed out. It was his Master and Chen Fan, as well as numerous others from the Blue Sea Sect. His wife was also there.

Chen Fan grabbed Meng Hao, and his wife threw her arms around him, tears streaming down her face.

"Meng Hao, have you gone crazy!?" Chen Fan roared. The others from the Blue Sea Sect came forward to restrain Meng Hao.

He looked at them, as well as at his wife and his Master. Finally he turned to Chen Fan. He wasn't sure what to say. He opened his mouth to speak, but then simply coughed up some blood and lost consciousness.

When he woke up, he was back in the Blue Sea Sect. His wife was standing protectively next to him, her eyes sunken with worry and anxiety.

Meng Hao lay there quietly. His eyes seemed empty. People came to visit, but those empty eyes never changed. He didn't speak, and in fact, spent most of the day by the window looking out at Heaven and Earth. No one had any idea what he was thinking.

He was the only one that was aware that the flow from the copper mirror was growing stronger. At first, it had pulsed out only once a month or so. But now, it pulsed out many times. Furthermore, his view of the world constantly rippled, as if what he was looking at was about to be peeled away to reveal something beneath.

The warm flow made its way through his body, but did nothing to heal any of his injuries, not that he cared about them to begin with. He simply stared out the window.

The consequences for slaughtering Fatty and the others were already playing out. The other sects were furious, and had joined forces to try to force the Blue Sea Sect to hand over Meng Hao.

The Blue Sea Sect had refused to give in, and thus, a war began.

The fighting escalated rapidly. Soon, the rumbling of battle could be heard on the Blue Sea Sect's planet. Countless disciples died. Some of the allied sects had already managed to fight their way into the Blue Sea Sect itself.

The sound of explosions filled the world, but Meng Hao didn't care. Nor did he care about the looks cast upon him by his wife, or the other fellow disciples. They were looks of concern, anxiety, reproach, and even hatred.

Meng Hao didn't respond to such looks.

Gradually, voices rang out within the sect itself, calling for Meng Hao to be handed over. However, his Master, Chen Fan, and other fellow disciples vowed to die before doing such a thing. Meng Hao watched this happen silently. Inside, he could feel ripples of emotion when he saw what was happening, but he violently suppressed them.

He wanted to see exactly how far things would go.

Eventually, a month later, the allied sects broke through the main gate of the Blue Sea Sect. Slaughter ensued. Meng Hao watched his wife sustain serious injuries protecting him. He watched a flying sword stab into his son's forehead. As the boy died, he cried out weakly for his father. Meng Hao ignored that, although he trembled with grief.

"Enough, enough...." he said, laughing bitterly.

Chapter 1511: I'm Meng Hao!!

The Blue Sea Sect wasn't exterminated. Even as Meng Hao stood there silently, grief filling his eyes, his heart trembling, a will spread out that caused all the bitterly fighting cultivators to suddenly drop to their knees.

It was the will of Allheaven, which became a radiant, seven-colored light that filled the starry sky.

It wasn't just in the location of the Blue Sea Sect; it actually spread out to cover all of the Hundred Sects in the Vast Expanse Cosmos....

"Oh ye people of mine...." It was an ancient voice that filled the minds of all cultivators in the Vast Expanse Cosmos, and told them that from this moment on, slaughter was not permitted.

The dispute was over. And that was because... the identity of the ninety-ninth generation Son of Allheaven was soon to be announced.

The majestic will told all people and all sects that in a mere half-year, the trial by fire to win the title of Son of Allheaven would begin, a grand battle royale. In the end, only one person... would be named the ninety-ninth generation Son of Allheaven.

That person would receive the blessing of Allheaven, and would represent Allheaven to step into the Vast Expanse Arcane Pocket Realm and accomplish a very special mission....

The voice faded away, and the light became countless motes that rained down onto the Hundred Sects of the Vast Expanse Cosmos. Any location with cultivators experienced that rain of light.

They were Allheaven seeds, and any cultivator who wished to participate in the trial by fire to become the Son of Allheaven needed to absorb one of them in order to qualify.

The disciples from the allied sects withdrew. None of them dared to countermand the orders of Allheaven. Not a single one hesitated for even a moment.

Thus, the war ended.

Silence replaced the bitterness in the Blue Sea Sect. It was almost as if everyone forgot about the bloody, bitter battle which had just been raging. All of the remaining disciples and Elders of the sect gathered together. With the exception of the very old, everyone was given an Allheaven seed.

One of them was delivered to Meng Hao by Chen Fan.

“Still confused I see,” Chen Fan said bitterly. “You don’t care how many people died in your sect, do you? Even your own son.... I thought you said none of this was real, and that only what you experienced in the Vast Expanse Arcane Pocket Realm was real.” Various emotions could be heard in his voice.

“Well, absorb this seed. Once you become the Son of Allheaven, you can go back into the Vast Expanse Arcane Pocket Realm. Then you can see for yourself what is real and what is not!” Chen Fan placed the Allheaven seed in front of Meng Hao, then stood there, waiting for Meng Hao to absorb it. Everyone else looked on with varied expressions. Some had hatred in their eyes, some seemed torn. All seemed to rue the war which had been sparked by Meng Hao.

Meng Hao looked at the Allheaven seed, and shivered. His wife was off in the distance, holding their dead son. She was giggling madly, seemingly in a daze.

Meng Hao stood there silently. He picked up the seed and examined it. It wriggled. Just as Chen Fan had said, by absorbing this seed, Meng Hao could become the Son of Allheaven. He could go back into the Vast Expanse Arcane Pocket Realm.

And yet, the current flowing into him from the copper mirror continued to grow hotter. It seemed to have reached a critical juncture, as if it were about to fuse with him. The indistinct voice he could hear was growing clearer by the moment.

His vision swam, and he suddenly saw a different version of himself. He saw himself sitting there cross-legged in the Blue Sea Sect. He saw himself absorb the seed and participate in the fight to become the Son of Allheaven. He took first place, and was named the Son of Allheaven.

That different version of himself offered formal greetings to Allheaven. The will of Allheaven filled his body, causing the seed to grow. It soon filled him through and through, after which he entered the Vast Expanse Arcane Pocket Realm.

As soon as he entered, he saw a beautiful woman. As soon as she caught sight of him, she smiled.

“Like I said, once you returned, you would be the Son of Allheaven.”

A tremor ran through Meng Hao. The dream suddenly ended, shattering to pieces. He opened his eyes, and everything became clear. The seed was still laying there on his palm. Even as he looked at it, it began to melt, as if it were about to bore into his flesh.

The heat from the copper mirror grew hotter than it ever had. It filled Meng Hao’s body, whereupon a bronze lamp appeared. Apparently, it had always been there, somehow concealed from Meng Hao’s perception. Now that it was visible, it began to shine brightly, sending out light that prevented anything from entering him.

As the light filled him, the confusion in his eyes faded away. His mind filled with crackling sounds. He thought about Ke Yunhai, and he thought about how Fatty and all the others had died. He thought about how his son had been killed, along with so many other fellow sect members.

But then, those memories became somewhat indistinct. At the same time, it was as if a veil had been ripped from his mind. Memories of the starry sky of the Vast Expanse, and the Mountain and Sea Realm, flooded into his mind. The voice which had been calling out to him so indistinctly was now as clear as crystal.

That voice was his own, and it was speaking four simple words!

“I am Meng Hao,” he murmured. He looked at Chen Fan, and his eyes clear, lacking any confusion whatsoever. Sighing, he rose to his feet. “Elder Brother Chen Fan, I am no longer confused.”

He looked over at his wife, his gaze warm.

Chen Fan seemed more torn than ever, as though he were sighing

inwardly. Meng Hao's wife shivered in response to his words. Tears streaming down her face, she rushed over and embraced him.

"There there, everything's fine...." Meng Hao said softly. More tears flowed as she held him tightly, as if she feared that loosening her grip would cause him to leave forever.

Meng Hao's eyes were bloodshot, but he seemed completely calm as he looked down at his wife.

No one knew that after his eyes opened just now, his view of the world became completely different.

The sky was no longer clear, but rather, was full of mist. The mountains were not lush and green; they were barren and empty. The beautifully decorated architecture of the sect was now nothing more than crumbled ruins.

His wife was actually a dessicated corpse, as was virtually everyone else in the sect. What had once been flourishing spiritual energy was really the sinister aura of death and an aroma of decay.

His son, the eight-year-old boy, was actually not a boy. He was a dwarf, and also a dessicated corpse. His eye sockets didn't contain eyes, only writhing black maggots.

In all of Heaven and Earth, there was only one other person besides Meng Hao who was different. Chen Fan.

Meng Hao looked around at everything, then closed his eyes.

His wife was smiling, seemingly elated that her husband had finally recovered. She was just about to say something when...

Meng Hao reached up and stroked her hair, his gaze warmer than ever. However, if you looked very closely, you would see a tiny flicker of pity in his eyes.

"Little Junior Brother," Chen Fan said, looking more torn than ever, "you need to absorb that Allheaven seed as soon as possible. I'll—"

"Elder Brother Chen Fan," Meng Hao interrupted calmly, "even after

some contemplation, I can't think of any time that I ever let you down. Not once. I've always respected you, and no matter what happened, you have always been my Eldest Brother." Meng Hao held his wife and looked over at Chen Fan.

Chen Fan's heart thumped, and he was just about to say something else, when Meng Hao's voice spoke out, seemingly filled with magical power.

"I cannot forget! I cannot forget those things which you say are illusions. I cannot forget that which exists in my mind. If those real things are actually illusions, a mere dream... then I would rather sink into that dream than ever wake up." He felt his wife suddenly go stiff. His eyes filled with pity as he suddenly pushed his hand down hard onto her back.

Under the shocked glances of all present, that simple movement severed his wife's aura and exterminated her soul. Meng Hao slowly rose to his feet.

"It's better to release you," he said softly. "That way no one can control your corpse or soul after death."

The surrounding crowds were as shocked as if they had been struck by lightning. After a moment of silence, enraged howls rose up, and their bloodshot eyes filled with shock and fear.

The sect Elders took to flight. The Sect Leader and even the Dao Realm experts were flabbergasted.

"Meng Hao!" Chen Fan roared in disbelief.

At the same time, an anguished cry rose up from Meng Hao's Master, who was also his father-in-law. He flew over, trembling, staring first at his daughter's corpse, and then at Meng Hao. Coughing up a mouthful of blood, he began to laugh, and then lunged at Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's eyes were calm. The world had completely transformed. As of this moment, he was not being attacked by a middle-aged man, but rather, a corpse, a corpse with a huge, empty hole in its chest....

Meng Hao sighed and closed his eyes. Just when the man was almost upon him, Meng Hao opened his eyes again. Although they were still

bloodshot, the pupils were now crimson. He clenched his right hand into a fist and punched out, shredding his Master into a haze of blood and gore.

That was the battle prowess of the peak 9-Essences level, which exploded out from Meng Hao.

“Elder Brother Meng is bedeviled!!”

“Kill him!” Roars of fury and rage echoed out from the mouths of the Elders. As they charged toward Meng Hao, his eyes flickered with pity, and he moved forward. He became a blur, and every person he encountered, regardless of the level of their cultivation base, was destroyed in body and mind by the single flick of a finger.

Soon, all Heaven and Earth was sinking into darkness. Miserable shrieks rose up. Wherever Meng Hao went, death followed. Blood flowed across the ground, and bodies could be seen everywhere.

However, what Meng Hao saw was a bit different. The blood which flowed was not red, but rather black and filthy. Furthermore, the corpses which lay in his wake had been corpses long before he struck them down.

Chapter 1512: It All Falls Apart!

Everything was quiet in the sect. Only Meng Hao and Chen Fan remained standing.

“Meng Hao, y-you...” Chen Fan was trembling in disbelief at everything which had just occurred. His eyes were filled with grief, rage, and conflict.

Meng Hao looked around at the corpses and sighed. Then he looked at the Allheaven seed which was trying to force its way into his palm, and crushed it!

Chen Fan looked at Meng Hao, his expression torn. “You exterminated your own sect! Killed your own wife and Master! All because of a world that’s an illusion? Was all this worth it, Meng Hao?”

Meng Hao looked up at him. “Chen Fan, I’ve always respected you as my Elder Brother.... Enough with the act. You have your path that you must follow. I’m not sure why you did this, although I’m sure you have your reasons. I can’t blame you. I have my own path too.”

Chen Fan stood there silently, bitterly. Finally, he smiled, a bitter, conflicted smile that gradually grew more resolute. “He promised me that as long as you lost yourself in here, my Ling’er would truly be resurrected. To him, something like that is as easy as flipping over a hand.

“Meng Hao, I, Chen Fan, have done anything and everything to truly resurrect my Ling’er. After all the years which have passed, this was my only hope.... Therefore, you have the right to blame me. You can even hate me. Meng Hao... I’m sorry. I’m sorry. I’m so sorry....”

Now Meng Hao also looked torn. Various memories flitted through his mind as he looked at Chen Fan. He knew that the Ling’er Chen Fan referred to was none other than Shan Ling from the Solitary Sword Sect.

Meng Hao shook his head, ignoring Chen Fan as he contemplated the danger he had just been in. If it weren’t for the copper mirror, for the enlightenment provided by the death of his foster father Ke Yunhai, and his own unimaginable willpower... he would surely have lost himself in

here and become exactly what Han Bei had described. He would have returned to her side as the Son of Allheaven.

It was time to leave. He took a step forward and made a ripping gesture with his hand. Rumbling echoed out as a rift was torn open into the air in front of him, which he prepared to step through.

“Meng Hao, you can’t leave!” cried Chen Fan, tears streaming down his face. “You have to stay!” His eyes filled with determination, with obsessed focus. He lifted his hands up, and the world shook. Apparently, a will was descending, a will which then flowed into Chen Fan himself.

Chen Fan’s energy skyrocketed, and his cultivation base power soared. Blue veins bulged out on his face, and he shook visibly. His eyes turned crimson, and seemed to suddenly lack conscious thought. Only obsession remained.

Suddenly, he turned into a blur that shot toward Meng Hao. He lifted his right hand, whereupon Heaven and Earth seemed to back him, and the starry sky seemed to exist within his hands. Apparently, the will of Allheaven had taken over Chen Fan’s body, and was using him as its shell to act within the world.

Rumbling echoed out, and Meng Hao fell back. Blood oozed out of the corners of his mouth, and his eyes shone with grief. The person in front of him was his Elder Brother, someone he had known all the way back in the Reliance Sect. Back on Planet South Heaven, he had almost been like a blood brother to him.

But now, they had no option other than to fight.

There could be no holding back or surrendering. Chen Fan could not retreat. He had gambled everything, all in the hopes of resurrecting his wife.

Neither could Meng Hao retreat. If he was defeated, he would be lost in this place, and would lose everything. This place was both real and false. The objects were real; what was false was that they existed, not in the present, but the past.

Meng Hao smiled bitterly. He slapped his chest with his palm, and the copper mirror flew out, transforming into innumerable black threads which spread out to cover his entire body in a suit of armor. The Battle Weapon appeared in his hand, and he transformed into a beam of light that shot toward Chen Fan.

Incredible rumbling echoed out. Heaven and Earth were shattered, and mountains were transformed into rubble. The sect became nothing more than ash as the two of them rose up into the starry sky as they battled.

Chen Fan was fighting with the power of the will of Allheaven, and the divine ability he unleashed was bizarre. Unexpectedly, it was... a memory magic!

It was a deceptively unthreatening magic that targeted specific memories in Meng Hao's mind, causing all of the versions of Chen Fan which existed there to simultaneously attack him.

It wasn't just the current Meng Hao that was being targeted, it was all of the different versions of him throughout history, including Planet South Heaven and the Reliance Sect.

When put into words, it is a difficult thing to describe, but the end result was that even as Chen Fan and Meng Hao fought in reality, countless stabs of pain filled Meng Hao's mind.

He felt his memories diverging from reality, as if all of his memories of Chen Fan were rising up and exploding. This magical technique was no mere divine ability, it was a Dao which went far beyond any sort of natural or magical law.

It was something the likes of which Meng Hao had never before experienced.

However, he knew that the only way to vanquish Chen Fan was to defeat him in all of the past memories that existed in his mind.

As they fought in reality, Meng Hao thought back to the time when the 33 Heavens were about to descend upon the Mountain and Sea Realm. Even as he prepared to defend the Mountains and Seas, Chen Fan

suddenly attacked him.

At the same time, back on Planet South Heaven, Meng Hao was visiting Chen Fan in his sect. They were drinking in front of the rock that was Shan Ling, when suddenly, Chen Fan's eyes flickered with killing intent, and he slashed his sword out at Meng Hao.

Simultaneously, he was back in the lands of South Heaven, shortly after leaving the Reliance Sect. He had just arrived in the heart of the Southern Domain when he was reunited with Chen Fan. Chen Fan was delighted to see him, but then, his face twisted viciously, and he attacked.

They were back in the Reliance Sect, when all of the other great sects came to try to seize the Sublime Spirit Scripture. As the other disciples were taken away, Meng Hao stood alone on the mountaintop, watching bitterly as a middle-aged man from the Solitary Sword Sect asked Chen Fan if he wanted to be taken as a disciple of his sect.

Chen Fan was just about to respond when his eyes flickered. Without any warning, he suddenly turned and attacked Meng Hao.

There was another moment in which Meng Hao and Chen Fan were sitting together in the Reliance Sect. Chen Fan was introducing the sect to Meng Hao, when suddenly, his eyes flashed with coldness, and he attacked.

Back on the very day Meng Hao had joined the sect, he and Fatty were there together being escorted into the servants district, when suddenly a blur appeared, shooting down from one of the mountain tops. That blur shot directly toward Meng Hao, intent on killing him.

All of these things happened at the same time. Blood sprayed out of Meng Hao's mouth as he watched himself be killed by Chen Fan over and over again, and simultaneously, watched himself kill Chen Fan over and over again. The memories piled up onto one another, and at the same time, their real fight intensified.

The memories of them fighting transformed into seeds, seeds which, by means of some unique fashion, were implanted into his mind.

“Meng Hao,” Chen Fan cried, “become the Son of Allheaven. Become the Emissary of Allheaven. Get rid of your pain! All of this has been foreordained!” Then he roared: “Allheaven Transformation!”

A boom could be heard as his muscles and blood evaporated. He was left as nothing more than skin and bones, and the resulting bloody mist was filled with the will of Allheaven as it surged out to cover Meng Hao.

At the same time, the seeds inside of Meng Hao exploded, likewise turning into a mist which disseminated the will of Allheaven. The mist spread out, as if to infect Meng Hao inside and out with the will of Allheaven, to force him to become both the Son and Emissary of Allheaven.

Just when Meng Hao was about to fight back, he realized that the power of his own bloodline was doing nothing to defend him. In fact, it was even possible to say that his blood was perfectly suited to be able to act as a host for the will of Allheaven.

It was even the same with the Demonic qi inside of him!

It was as if everything about him had been prepared specifically for the will of Allheaven. If the will of Allheaven had entered the body of any other person, the process would not have occurred so efficiently.

It was as if this were the perfect possession, as if Meng Hao truly had been prepared specifically for the will of Allheaven.

In and out, whether it was the bloodline or the Demonic qi, whether it was within his memories or without, the will of Allheaven exploded, and Meng Hao seemed powerless to do anything about it. But then, the will of Allheaven suddenly lurched to a halt.

That will could occupy his soul, his blood, and even his Demonic qi. However, as it spread out through him, attempting to take control, it encountered fierce resistance.

That resistance came from the bronze lamp!

Furthermore, his body had been remoulded by the bronze lamp itself, and was therefore not perfectly suitable for the will of Allheaven. Because

of that, at this most critical of moments, the will of Allheaven suddenly stopped moving.

In that moment, the flame of the bronze lamp ignited, causing a majestic glow to spread out and to fight the will of Allheaven. The two seemed as incompatible as fire and water.

As that happened, the seemingly boundless will of Allheaven that existed in Heaven and Earth tried to force its way into Meng Hao to eradicate the flame of the bronze lamp.

It was a critical juncture. Meng Hao coughed up a mouthful of blood, and his eyes shone with red light. In the same moment that the bronze lamp and the will of Allheaven began to contend with each other, he extended his right hand and then made a sharp chopping motion at himself!

“Hexing magic: Karmic Hexing!”

Astonishingly, he was using Demon Sealing Hexing magic to find Chen Fan’s Karma. Countless Karma Threads appeared on his head, among which was a pitch-black strand that connected him to Chen Fan.

“Sever!” He roared, slashing down onto the thread with the Battle Weapon!

Chapter 1513: Five Pillars!

Without the bronze lamp, Meng Hao's Karmic Hexing would have been incapable of affecting his memories of Chen Fan, which were the extension of the will of Allheaven. But now that the bronze lamp had tied up the will of Allheaven, Meng Hao made his move, thus putting an end to the final bit of dangerous power being levied against him.

Moments ago, they had been on equal footing, but now that changed as the Battle Weapon completely destroyed Chen Fan's Karma Thread.

Now, no Karma existed at all between Meng Hao and Chen Fan. All of the images of Chen Fan within his memories were forcibly wiped away.

The seeds that had been formed by the will of Allheaven let out roars of rage as the brilliant light from the bronze lamp swept over them, driving them out.

Blood sprayed out of Meng Hao's mouth, and he suddenly seemed much older. Even the slightest mistake moments ago would have resulted in him being wiped out of existence.

He thought back to the Emissary of Allheaven, Song Daozi, who had stepped outside the Vast Expanse with a cultivation base half a step into Transcendence, and had returned as the Emissary of Allheaven.

He could well imagine Song Daozi facing a similar situation as he had. And yet, even being half a step into Transcendence, he had been unable to avoid the fate which awaited him. Meng Hao knew that without the bronze lamp, he would likely have walked the same path as Song Daozi.

As the will of Allheaven was forcibly severed from Meng Hao, Heaven and Earth began to shake violently, tearing rifts open throughout the starry sky.

Amidst the rumbling, the rifts opened up longer and wider, spreading out in all directions. As for Chen Fan, he was there in front of Meng Hao, his body withered up. He looked at Meng Hao, and smiled. It was a smile of grief, pain, and release.

“Meng Hao, your Elder Brother let you down!” Chen Fan let out a roar, then smashed his hand viciously down onto his own forehead.

Meng Hao’s face fell, and he moved forward to intervene, but Chen Fan was too fast. A boom rang out, and Chen Fan exploded. He was killed in body and mind.

For the sake of Shan Ling, he had turned a blind eye to the destruction of the Mountain and Sea Realm. He had chosen to turn on his little Junior Brother, to cooperate with the will of Allheaven to try to erase his mind. In the end, he had even gone so far as to allow the memories in Meng Hao’s mind to be infected by the seeds of the will of Allheaven.

Despite all that he had done, Chen Fan had never been cruel and merciless. Hesitation had always lurked in his heart as guilt.

In the end, when it was obvious how things would end, he didn’t even have the face to look at Meng Hao. In his bitterness, he chose simply to end his own life. Perhaps his death could be some form of compensation.

Meng Hao quietly looked at the spot where Chen Fan had died, heart aching with bitterness. Even though Chen Fan had chosen to attack him, Meng Hao didn’t feel any hatred for him. Nowadays, he had fewer friends than ever, and he cherished all of them.

Chen Fan’s death caused the destruction of the surrounding world to speed up. Soon, ear-splitting rumbling sounds could be heard as everything fell to pieces.

When that happened it was like a veil being lifted away, revealing... what was truly outside the Vast Expanse.

Everything was barren. There was no mist like in the Vast Expanse, nor were there any signs of life. Everything was in ruins, and filled with an aura of death.

Wreckage and corpses were strewn about. There was also dust that floated there eternally.

Long ago, this truly had been the Vast Expanse Cosmos, with the Hundred Sects and countless cultivators. That was all true....

But now, their glory had faded into nothing.

It was an enormous place, but even still, it was possible to make out something very far off in the distance. There were five pillars which seemed impossibly high, stretching up into the starry sky.

This was not Meng Hao's first time seeing the five pillars. Back in the underground tunnel in the necropolis, he had seen them via divine sense. This time, though, he was able to see them with his own two eyes. 1

However, there was something different about them this time.... Back in the fresco, all five pillars had stood strong and tall. But now, three of them had been destroyed!

Only two of them were whole as they stretched up into the starry sky.

Meng Hao looked at them quietly for a moment, and then his eyes glittered. Because of his bloodline, his Demonic qi, and also because of everything that had happened in the Mountain and Sea Realm, he had already guessed much of the truth.

"A plot which was hatched long, long ago.

"The Allheaven bloodlines. Apparently they were created for the express purpose of benefiting Allheaven!

"And the Demon... comes from the Immortal. I'm not the first Demon. There were many before me. All of them transformed in the moment when they were about to become the Immortal. And the Demon... is what Allheaven wants to appear.

"Perhaps I'm thinking of things in a bit of a one-sided fashion. Perhaps in all of the years in which this starry sky has existed, the true Demon has never actually appeared. Perhaps in the critical moment, Allheaven stopped them all." Meng Hao couldn't help but think of Song Daozi.

He looked thoughtfully at the enormous pillars, then began to fly in their direction at top speed.

Time passed. He wasn't sure how long he had flown, but he kept getting closer and closer. Eventually, he reached the location of one of the

destroyed pillars. As he hovered there, he sensed an aura which could shake Heaven and Earth. It was not the aura of the Immortal or the Demon, but rather, the Devil!

As soon as he sensed the Devil aura, he thought of the Devil Realm Continent. Then, he slowly reached his hand out toward the indescribably large column, and gently pushed down onto its surface.

This part is in spoiler tags because it contains general descriptions of the endings of Renegade Immortal and Beseech the Devil. The descriptions are not very detailed, but I know some readers hate spoilers. Please note that because this is part of the story, it actually DOES NOT COUNT as spoiler content for purposes of discussion in the comments on the chapter. If you usually participate in the comments, but want to avoid spoilers about this section, I suggest avoiding the comments section for this chapter.

Meng Hao was left panting. When he pulled his hand away, he looked at the destroyed column with a complicated expression. After a long moment, he turned and headed toward the next column.

This column was not destroyed. It was one of the two that stretched high up into the starry sky!

When he reached out to touch it, he saw nothing inside except for emptiness. There was no Transcendent cultivator, but there was shocking Immortal qi, which was apparently brewing inside of the column. Just visible within the Immortal qi were countless images, all of which seemed to depict people.

“Those people were all cultivating the magic of Immortality, and were on the path to becoming the Immortal!

“There has never been a Transcendent Immortal....” Meng Hao murmured. After examining it further, he realized that the column was weak, almost to the point of collapse. If the true Immortal ever appeared, it was likely that the column would immediately be destroyed.

Meng Hao pulled his hand away. After some more thought, he began to fly toward the fourth column, which was the final destroyed column.

Time went by. After passing through all of the dust and ruins to arrive at the fourth column, he took a deep breath, reached out, and touched it. Rumbling filled his mind, and he caught sight of a young man. He wore a robe decorated in flowers, and seemed different than the two other young men Meng Hao had just seen. A sarcastic smile could be seen on his face, and his eyes glittered with intelligence. His features were delicate and even pretty, and he almost looked as if he were recovering from an illness.

Meng Hao watched the young man silently. He didn't know who he was, but as he looked on, the young man created the copper mirror. He also held a bronze lamp in his hand. Furthermore, the robe he was wearing was the same robe Meng Hao had seen being worn by the person who had faced the Immortal Tribulation and been killed by the finger from the Heavens. Meng Hao instantly realized who this was.

Patriarch Vast Expanse!

Eventually, Meng Hao watched as Patriarch Vast Expanse also went outside the Vast Expanse. He destroyed another of the fingers, and then disappeared into the void.

Eventually, Meng Hao pulled his hand back. After a moment of thought, he proceeded toward the last of the pillars, one of the two which were still erect.

As he flew closer and closer, a powerful Demonic qi from the column began to form a resonance with him.

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1. I think I may have mentioned before that this is a contradiction some earlier chapters. I think Er Gen changed his mind later about the columns, but have yet to confirm that with him. When I do I'll adjust past chapters as necessary.

Chapter 1514: [1]

The instant that resonance formed with the Demonic qi, Meng Hao's eyes began to shine with a deep, profound light. He had already surmised that of the five pillars, there was one for the Ghost, God, Immortal, Devil, and finally...

The Demon!

He increased his speed, and eventually arrived at the final staggeringly large pillar which stretched up into the starry sky. After a moment of thought, he reached out and touched the pillar. Then he frowned.

Eventually, he pulled his hand away, and his eyes flashed.

"The other pillars don't seem to have much to do with me. But this pillar... represents the Demon. There is a resonance with me, and yet, when I touch it, no strange transformations occur...." He wasn't quite sure what that meant, but he could tell that the resonance was growing stronger. Gradually, a sensation of deadly crisis began to build up within him.

Eyes flickering, he spun. Instead of spending any more time in contact with the final pillar, he decided to leave.

He was soon 30 meters away, then 300. The pillar still stood in place, and the farther away he went, the weaker the resonance became.

He didn't seem to be reacting much to that, but inwardly, he was focused on examining himself. When he reached the 3,000-meter mark, he hesitated a bit. It wasn't that he wasn't curious about the column. Rather, he had to forcibly resist the urge to rush back and touch it.

He definitely needed to come to a deeper understanding of what dangers lurked in this area.

After the 3,000-meter mark, his eyes flickered, and he pushed himself faster. When he was several thousand meters away, he increased his speed yet again.

Even when he was 30,000 meters away, nothing had happened. Finally,

he stopped in thought for a moment, then gritted his teeth and headed back toward the pillar. Moments later, he arrived, then reached out to touch it.

Rumbling filled his mind, and as his Demonic qi blended with the aura of the pillar, the resonance exploded in intensity, and he suddenly realized that there was an illusory world within the pillar.

It was like the mist of the Vast Expanse, boundless and majestic. At first, there didn't seem to be anything other than mist, but soon, Meng Hao realized that within the very center of the world was a bright red thread.

It was a thread that looked like a blood vessel, except it was huge. Soon, he realized that the thread twisted and turned around on itself, forming a shape. The shape of a person!

There were four limbs visible, as well as a head. Apparently, that thread really was a blood vessel, and it really was forming into the shape of a person.

There was no flesh or blood, and no bones. Just a system of blood vessels.

Shockingly, there appeared to be fruits growing from the blood vessels!

In total, there were ninety-eight of them.

Some were large and some were small, and they were located throughout the shape which the blood vessels formed. All of them were withered, as though their life and quintessence had been absorbed, and they were what had enabled the shape of the person to take form.

Upon closer examination, it was clear that the various fruits had faces on them, all of whom had their eyes closed, and were completely motionless.

As Meng Hao examined all of this, his heart began to pound. Eventually, his eyes fell upon the ninety-eighth fruit, and the ninety-eighth face. Shockingly, that face... was the same face which had attempted to interfere with Meng Hao summoning the copper mirror, the Emissary of Allheaven.

It was Song Daozi!

“These faces....” Meng Hao gasped as an idea suddenly struck him, a vast, monumental idea that left his mind completely spinning.

“These faces are all of the people who were turned from Immortal to Demon... From ancient times until now, there have been many people like Song Daozi, all of whom were turned into... the Demon! No, that’s not right. The true Demon hasn’t appeared yet, otherwise, this pillar would look very different!

“These people all... became food for this person-shaped outline, in the moment that they were about to transform into the true Demon!” Meng Hao’s mind reeled at the sight of all the faces on the fruit, and the human-shaped network of blood vessels. Suddenly, he was struck with the realization that the shape... wasn’t complete. It lacked a final fruit.

That empty location was where the heart should be. With a fruit there, the outline of this person would be complete and perfect.

Almost as soon as his eyes fell upon the empty location of the heart, all of the ninety-eight faces’ eyes suddenly opened, and they looked at Meng Hao.

His mind was left reeling, his scalp tingling. The ninety-eight faces staring at him caused him to recall how there had been ninety-eight Sons of Allheaven.

Even as he began to pull back his divine sense, the ninety-eight faces all smiled.

They were sinister smiles, mysterious to the extreme, and the instant they appeared, the faces spoke.

“You’re the missing piece... don’t go... don’t go...”

The bizarre voices filled the world, and Meng Hao’s mind spun. His Demonic qi suddenly seemed to be on the verge of erupting.

Almost simultaneously, the faces began to transform one by one into beams of light which shot toward him.

There was no time for Meng Hao to do anything other than sever his divine sense. Outside of the pillar, he quickly pulled his hand away and backed up.

In almost that same instant, the pillar began to shake, and ninety-eight faces suddenly shot out from it into the starry sky outside the Vast Expanse. Without pausing for a moment, they began to speed in Meng Hao's direction.

As they neared, Meng Hao's hands flashed in a double-handed incantation gesture, and he unleashed a divine ability. Numerous mountains descended to block the path of the faces. And yet the bizarre faces simply passed directly through the mountains as they closed in on Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's face fell, and he punched out with his right hand. The Devil-Butchering Fist created a massive tempest, and yet the faces completely disregarded it, and were soon almost right in front of him. Apparently, no matter what techniques he unleashed upon them, it could do nothing to stop them.

His eyes flashed with killing intent, and he let out a cold harrumph. Suddenly, the copper mirror armor appeared, and he slashed out with the Battle Weapon. It split open the void, creating a vast rift which separated him from the faces.

This time, it seemed much harder for the faces to keep going, and over ten of them were actually split in half from the effort. And yet, they didn't dissipate, but kept speeding toward him.

Meng Hao was continuously falling back, his face grim. No matter what ideas he came up with to deal with the situation, none of them worked. He sent out his Demonic qi, only to watch as the faces devoured it. Apparently, it was like fuel for them.

Meng Hao's face flickered as he pressed on, followed by the swarm of faces. They quickly caught up to him, and began to surround him, blocking his path. Then, they smiled oddly and lunged toward him with gaping jaws.

They bit into his flesh, apparently intent on chewing into his body and consuming him.

“Screw off!” Meng Hao said, eyes flashing coldly. His cultivation base erupted, and the Battle Weapon flashed as he swung it. A blast of wind swept out in all directions, and yet it didn’t seem to affect the faces at all.

Blue veins popped out on Meng Hao’s face, and he gritted his teeth violently. It was at this point that the bronze lamp sent blazing light out in all directions, and the faces began to tremble. Screaming, they fell back.

Meng Hao finally took a deep breath, and used the opportunity to flee.

However, almost as soon as he broke free from the faces, they pounced on him again. The light of the bronze lamp still caused them to scream, and yet they didn’t give up. They endured the pain and tried again to chew into Meng Hao’s flesh.

The intense light from the bronze lamp caused them to tremble on the verge of melting, and yet Meng Hao’s aura was something they desired, something that was like food for them... Demonic qi.

Meng Hao’s own Demonic qi was absorbed by the faces, nourishing them, giving them strength to fight the light of the bronze lamp.

Pain wracked Meng Hao, inside and out, and his eyes were completely bloodshot. Having been sent outside the Vast Expanse by Han Bei, he managed to unveil many secrets, and dispel many doubts. And yet, he had been placed in incredible, deadly danger.

Whether it was the illusion of which Chen Fan had been a part of, or the personal arrival of the will of Allheaven, or these faces, they were all situations in which the slightest mistake would lead to eternal doom!

He could well imagine what had occurred to the ninety-eight cultivators like Song Daozi whom these faces represented. They were people who had reached a point very similar to this, and none of them had been able to escape. All had perished in the end, becoming components of the person-shaped outline that he had just seen.

As for Meng Hao, he had dispelled the illusion and cast out the will of

Allheaven. And yet, he was not quite strong enough to deal with the faces, no matter how much he wanted to.

His eyes were crimson, and he simply couldn't give in to the idea of being defeated. His clone was almost finished with his work, meaning that the Ninth Hex was close to completion. He was unprecedentedly close to Transcendence.

Just when everything was almost complete, this sudden turn of events occurred. Suddenly, deep hatred for Han Bei rose up within his heart.

Rumbling could be heard as the faces continued to chew into his body, to devour his life force, his Demonic qi, his soul, his everything.

It took only a moment for him to become extremely withered. It was as if his fate were unavoidable. And yet, he refused to believe that. He lifted his right hand and prepared to call upon his final trump card, a divine ability that he wouldn't use unless there were absolutely, positively no other options left. The price to be paid to use it would be unimaginably high.

But then, suddenly, a piercing cry rang out from within his armor. All of a sudden, the parrot flew out!

How quickly the tide had turned!

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1. This chapter is untitled in the original Chinese.

Chapter 1515: Call Me Lord Fifth, Bitches!

The parrot's eyes were bright red as it hovered there by Meng Hao. Back when they were first reunited, its memories had been in chaos. However, despite being unable to see things clearly, it knew that Meng Hao was very important, and had thus chosen to return to him.

It saw everything that happened after that, the result being that the shattered memories in its head seemed to increase constantly. It was as if there were a tiny node inside of its mind, a node which contained the image of Meng Hao. After Meng Hao appeared in the flesh, that node burst open, allowing the parrot's erased mind to appear once again.

Eventually, in this moment of deep crisis, its erased memories were fully fused together, and erupted with great power.

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

Memories exploded out into the parrot's mind. It saw itself meeting Meng Hao for the first time, saw itself facing danger with him in numerous adventures. Everything began to awaken.

Back when its mind had been erased, it had managed to bury that node deep inside of itself, and it was that which eventually gave it the chance to recover!

The parrot was crafty, and although things had ended tragically back then, and it had been filled with grief, it had still managed to devise a backup plan.

"Lord Fifth!" the parrot roared. "Call me Lord Fifth, bitches!!" It remembered. It remembered everything. It looked over at Meng Hao being devoured by the faces, and suddenly let out a powerful squawk. Meng Hao's armor shattered, creating countless black sparks that, under the parrot's control, swirled around him, moving faster and faster until they formed a vortex.

The power of the vortex created numerous streams of gravitational force. However, that force didn't affect the world in general, just the faces

latched onto Meng Hao. Gradually, they were dragged away from Meng Hao, whose expression brightened. At the same time, the glow of the bronze lamp grew even more intense.

The faces let out bloodcurdling screams as they were ripped off of him. Then they were sucked into the vortex, where they shattered into pieces. That didn't kill them, though, it just created countless other, tinier faces. More and more of them appeared. There weren't just dozens now, but hundreds, then thousands, then tens of thousands.

Meng Hao was panting, and his body was dangerously withered. However, now that the faces were no longer consuming him, his battle prowess and cultivation base began to recover quickly. At the same time, he unleashed his own power, causing the vortex to spin even more quickly.

Soon it was a raging tempest, whereupon the parrot let out another squawk, sending it shooting off into the distance.

"Fudge!" it shrieked. "How dare you try to fight Lord Fifth! You might not have any fur or feathers, but Lord Fifth is going to go all out to put you down!" Meng Hao looked over at the parrot, his eyes shining with excitement. The fact that the parrot had recovered its memories was a momentous thing. Now, parrot and man both unleashed incredible speed to get as far away from the vortex as possible.

However, the tens of thousands of broken and shattered faces immediately gave chase. Apparently sensing that they wouldn't be able to catch up, the faces then merged together into one huge swath of skin!

The skin had no bones, no muscle, and no blood. It was simply a patch of human-shaped skin that whistled through the starry sky toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao and the parrot fled, and the skin chased them from behind. The parrot let out a mighty squawk, as if it were going to hold nothing back.

"What do we do, Meng Hao? Dammit! Lord Fifth's memories were just restored, only to be pulled into this situation? Whadda we do? Whadda we

do??

“We’re outside of the Vast Expanse now. If we delay, the will of Allheaven will fully awaken, and then we’ll be dead for sure. Only a bit of his will is awake now.... We have to get back into the Vast Expanse! The will of Allheaven won’t be able to directly affect us in there.

“Meng Hao, can you create a distraction? Give me the time it takes an incense stick to burn, and I can sacrifice some of the Essence power of the copper mirror to set up a teleportation portal. That will be able to get us back into the starry sky of the Vast Expanse!” Despite the incredible speed with which the parrot and Meng Hao were moving, the patch of skin was moving even faster, and was closing in rapidly.

Meng Hao’s eyes glittered. They were in a deadly trap, a trap set up to target him, and as such, his eyes flickered with killing intent.

“The time it takes an incense stick to burn? I think I can do that....” After a moment of thought, he gritted his teeth. If the parrot hadn’t recovered its memories and taken the initiative to help, he would already have resorted to that one certain magic.

It was his trump card, a magical technique that was not yet complete, and might even spawn some unexpected side-effects. As for whether such transformations would be beneficial or detrimental, it was impossible to tell.

At the moment, though, there were no other options. Meng Hao’s eyes glittered coldly as he suddenly spun in place and waved his hand.

“Start setting up the spell formation!” he growled. He and the parrot had worked together for so long that there was no need for deliberation. Instantly, black threads shot out from the parrot and began to spin in place behind Meng Hao in the form of a teleportation portal.

Meng Hao took a deep breath. His eyes shone with a brilliant light as he extended his finger out into the starry sky and murmured, “Ninth Hex!”

What he was about to unleash was none other than... the Ninth Hex! His clone had already completed eight of the sealing marks that would make

the final version. Because the final mark wasn't complete, if Meng Hao unleashed the Ninth Hex, it could have some unknown effect on his clone. He wasn't sure what exactly would happen, but now was not the time to contemplate misgivings.

He performed an incantation gesture with his left hand, and then shoved his hand out.

"First sealing mark!" Rumbling sounds filled Heaven and Earth, and everything shook. The starry sky vibrated as an indescribable power began to converge in front of Meng Hao.

As soon as the sealing mark appeared, the patch of skin suddenly lurched to a halt, and a strange gleam appeared deep in its eyes.

Next, Meng Hao performed another incantation gesture, causing the second sealing mark to appear. It merged with the first sealing mark, causing the energy to rocket even higher, reaching a level ten times higher than before. Then came the third sealing mark, and the fourth. One by one, they all appeared and merged together, and the terrifying energy reached an unbelievable level, causing everything in the starry sky to shake violently.

Next were the fifth, sixth, and seventh sealing marks.... A level of power appeared that the Vast Expanse Shrine had been unable to withstand, a power that would cause even peak 9-Essences cultivators to tremble. With seven sealing marks, it already seemed possible to seal the Heavens.

The patch of skin seemed shocked. For the first time... it began to back up instead of chase. However, it was in that very moment that the light in Meng Hao's eyes shone, and he threw his arms up. The seven sealing marks formed a dazzling magical symbol that began to speed forward, emanating a will that could seal the Heavens.

The light that shone out from it was majestic to the extreme, a light that seemed capable of sealing anything and everything, that could cause everything bright to grow dark, that could cause all living beings to bow their heads. Rumbling echoed out as the sea of light swept through the starry sky toward the patch of skin.

“What is that...?” Countless howls began to echo out from within the skin. However, no matter how it tried to evade, there was no avoiding the light, which slammed into the skin.

Behind Meng Hao, the parrot gaped in shock at what was happening.

Meng Hao shivered, and blood sprayed out of his mouth. Using the incomplete Ninth Hex in this way could be done only by paying a great cost.

Roaring sounds spread out in all directions, and at the same time, bloodcurdling screams echoed out from the skin as it was shredded to pieces by the light. Numerous bedraggled faces appeared, which immediately began to fly back toward the column they had come from.

Meng Hao’s face was pale, and he was swaying back and forth. The parrot immediately gushed, “Alright, alright, I’m almost ready. We can teleport out in just a moment.”

Meng Hao looked up, and in the iciest of voices said, “How could I flee?”

He took a step forward, and his cultivation base surged with power. “How could I run?”

With that, he transformed into a beam of light which shot at incredible speed toward the pillar that the faces were fleeing to.

“Ever since that bitch Han Bei sent me here, this place has tried to kill me over and over again. First was the illusion with Elder Brother Chen Fan, then the will of Allheaven trying to possess me. Then these five pillars showed up, and the Demonic qi faces tried to eat me....

“After all that, how could I flee? How could I run?” Roaring, he shoved his arms out in front of him, causing boundless light to surge up.

“I’ve been forced into unleashing my incomplete Ninth Hex. Well then... I’m definitely not going to waste the opportunity!

“In the past, there was the underworld Ghost, the white-haired cultivator of the Immortal Gods, and the Transcendent expert from the Devil Realm. They destroyed three columns, and although I might not be ready to do the

same thing, I might as well do a dry run!” Rumbling echoed out as Meng Hao shoved the light of the combined sealing marks directly toward the column of Demonic qi.

As he flew along, the starry sky shattered, and the faces screamed. The light picked up speed, and as it neared the column, killing intent flickered in Meng Hao’s eyes. Then, he performing an incantation gesture and roared, “Eight sealing marks!!”

With that, the eighth sealing mark appeared, glittering brightly. As it merged into the brightness, and fused with the other seven sealing marks, the light began to shine a bright violet color!

The violet light caused the starry sky to go quiet. Everything began to vibrate in complete helplessness. The faces faded away, screaming, as the light slashed into the pillar representing the Demon.

The sky shattered, and everything was thrown into chaos as the Demon pillar shuddered.

Meanwhile, back in the starry sky of Allheaven, on Planet Vast Expanse, on the first continent, in one of the cities of the mortal world, the ninth reincarnation of Meng Hao’s clone, Little Treasure, suddenly coughed up a huge mouthful of blood. Then he teetered in place for a moment before collapsing onto the ground.

The entire household was thrown into chaos.

He began to shiver and spasm as numerous sealing marks began to shine brightly on his forehead.

Chapter 1516: The Return!

The fight continued outside the Vast Expanse.

The light formed from the eight sealing marks of Meng Hao's Ninth Hex was so powerful that it surpassed the 9-Essences level. Meng Hao wasn't sure how far away it was from the Transcendent level, but he was sure that not a single 9-Essences cultivator would be able to survive an encounter with it!

Ear-splitting rumbling sounds spread out in all directions. The faces weren't even able to get back into the column before they were incinerated.

Before dying, they let out miserable screams, which faded away almost before they even began. Just before dissipating, their expressions seemed to be those of release and gratitude.

Soon, everything was quiet and still. It happened faster than either Meng Hao or the parrot could ever have imagined.

The parrot looked over at the Demon pillar, which was still trembling, and Meng Hao, who was radiating an air of madness.

The parrot couldn't help but take a deep breath as it gaped at Meng Hao. After all the years that they had been separated, it turned out that Meng Hao was still... the type to seek revenge over the smallest grievance!

"What... what is he planning to do?" the parrot thought, eyes wide with disbelief. "How vicious! That... that pillar can only be destroyed by a Transcendent cultivator. He wants to try to destroy the Demon pillar now?"

The parrot looked around at the destruction and chaos in the starry sky, then back at the pillar. A moment later, after the light faded away, a cracking sound rang out.

At the same time, it was possible to see that a crevice had appeared on the pillar. Although the pillar wasn't crushed, the crevice which had opened up could obviously not be mended.

The parrot shivered and then yelled, “Meng Hao, that’s enough. Really, enough is enough. The spell formation is ready. We need to get out of here as soon as possible!” The parrot then turned toward the completed spell formation, which began to rumble to life.

Meng Hao immediately began to back up. Although the battle had been bitter, he had won a stunning victory.

“I can’t destroy this pillar now,” he thought, eyes glittering coldly, “but one of these days, I’ll come back here and wipe it out of existence!”

In almost the same moment that the crack had appeared, the person-shaped outline inside of the pillar had begun to shrink. The fruits on it exploded, and soon, a piercing shriek rang out. The shriek passed out of the column into the world beyond, echoing out in all directions.

Blood sprayed out of Meng Hao’s mouth as he heard the sound of the cry. Without the slightest hesitation, he increased his speed. Simultaneously, the pillar that represented the Immortal began to shrink and wither. That in turn caused the pillar of Demonic qi to begin to recover.

And yet, the crevice which had appeared remained. Shockingly, it was at this point that the will of the Vast Expanse rose up, causing the starry sky to shake. Then, a huge eye abruptly appeared up ahead.

It was enormous, and completely bloodshot. It was a mass of chaos, and seemed to contain the seething mist of the Vast Expanse. This eye was apparently the will of Allheaven, the final gambit to be played in this day’s events. As soon as it appeared, everything went completely still and quiet.

The opening of the eye caused Meng Hao to be filled with a sense of intense crisis. He could tell that the natural laws in the area were being destroyed, and as the eye gazed upon him, he felt a terrifying aura that caused his scalp to go numb. Immediately, the bronze lamp began to shine brighter than ever, transforming Meng Hao into a figure of light.

Almost in the same moment that the eye opened, Meng Hao reached the spell formation put together by the parrot.

The parrot howled as the spell formation began to activate. However, even as the light was still beginning to shine, the seemingly eternal eye caused the starry sky around it to twist and distort as a huge mouth appeared. Then, the mouth lunged toward Meng Hao and the parrot as if to consume them.

The parrot's eyes were bright red, and it howled again. Cracking sounds could be heard, which came from the cracks spreading out over the copper mirror. By damaging the mirror, it was possible to negate the effects of the changed natural law caused by the will of Allheaven. A moment later, rumbling sounds echoed out as the parrot and Meng Hao vanished.

That was when the mouth arrived. It took a huge bite, causing the starry sky to shake, and leaving a gigantic, smoking crater in the spot where the teleportation portal had been.

The eye glared off into the distance, and a piercing shriek was just barely audible from the direction of the Demonic qi pillar.

As that happened, the brilliant light of teleportation appeared in a dusty corner of the starry sky of Allheaven. A moment later, Meng Hao and the parrot appeared.

Meng Hao immediately coughed up some blood, and the parrot listed weakly. The light of teleportation faded away, and the copper mirror appeared, covered with cracks. Although it wasn't destroyed, it was clearly in worse condition than before the trip outside the Vast Expanse.

"Dammit!" the parrot said, looking very irritated. "Lord Fifth just woke up and was immediately thrown into grave danger? I quit. I quit, you hear? Meng Hao, you'd better give Lord Fifth a good explanation for all of this!"

Meng Hao's responded with a question: "Was that eye... Allheaven? Is Allheaven the will of the starry sky of the Vast Expanse?"

Fear could be seen in the parrot's eyes as it began to speak. "Legends say that the world Essence of the starry sky of the Vast Expanse has a will, a will who is called Allheaven. The main body of the will exists outside the Vast Expanse. And yet, that will can also fill the Vast Expanse itself. In the beginning, that will blessed all living things, and supposedly, even taught

all living beings how to practice cultivation. But as time went on, it began to weaken, and then go mad.

“However, I have a vague memory deep inside that seems to indicate... that this Allheaven actually has a different origin. What exactly that is, nobody knows.... Even I’m not sure. Dammit, how could I not know?” The parrot shook its head in confusion.

A thoughtful look could be seen in Meng Hao’s eye as he stared at the parrot and asked another question. “Were you created by Patriarch Vast Expanse?”

“Patriarch Vast Expanse....” the parrot murmured, its eyes gleaming with reminiscence. After awakening, its memories had slowly been revealed. After a long moment, it nodded, but then suddenly seemed to hesitate. Apparently... Patriarch Vast Expanse had created the copper mirror, but not the parrot. Apparently... the parrot came from a time before Patriarch Vast Expanse was even alive!

The parrot didn’t want to think about the past, and as such, began to yell at Meng Hao. “Forget about it. Meng Hao, you owe me an explanation. Dammit, Lord Fifth’s memories were just restored, and then I got scared nearly to death!!”

Meng Hao’s eyes flickered with killing intent as he looked off in the direction of Planet Vast Expanse. “I’m going to go get an explanation, for you and me both!”

It was just as he said; the next thing he was planning to do was to go get an explanation.

From what he could tell, the will of Allheaven could only affect him directly if he was outside of the Vast Expanse. Apparently, it couldn’t do anything within the Vast Expanse itself, which meant that Meng Hao was temporarily safe.

The parrot’s explanation had confirmed his suspicions. Meng Hao turned, killing intent flickering in his eyes as he made his way off into the distance.

The parrot immediately began to follow.

“Hey,” it asked, “where’d the meat jelly get off to, that old fart?” Its words were met by silence on Meng Hao’s part. The parrot suddenly shivered. “What... what happened?”

Sadness filled Meng Hao’s face as he opened his bag of holding and carefully pulled out the shattered remnants of the meat jelly armor. The parrot stared in shock for a long, long time before letting out a cry of anguish.

The moment of silence which followed seemed to last an eternity. Eventually, the parrot turned to Meng Hao, and its eyes were completely bloodshot.

“Meng Hao, I’m going to ask one thing, and you’re going to answer me. When... do we go slaughter them?!”

“Soon,” Meng Hao murmured in reply, his eyes equally as red. “We’ll slaughter the 33 Heavens, we’ll slaughter the Immortal God Continent, and we’ll slaughter the Devil Realm Continent. Then... we’ll go outside the Vast Expanse and slaughter the will of Allheaven!”

“Soon....” with that, he transformed into a beam of light that shot like lightning through the starry sky.

As he flew along, he rotated his cultivation base, but his withered body wasn’t recovering very quickly. He looked incredibly gaunt, and thus, incredibly fierce. His eyes flickered with red light, making him look almost like he had just climbed up out of the grave.

Shocking rumbles echoed out in Heaven and Earth as he flew toward Planet Vast Expanse with deadly intent. It only took a few months of travel. After all, he hadn’t been very far from Planet Vast Expanse to begin with. Soon, he was looking at the planet from some distance away.

As he neared, the planet’s protective shield sprang up as if to block him. Meng Hao didn’t even look at it. He passed directly through it, whereupon a somber, dignified voice echoed out.

“Respectful greetings, Ninth Paragon! Welcome back!”

Even as the voice rang out, Meng Hao entered the atmosphere of Planet Vast Expanse. As soon as he did, the other Paragons could sense his presence, and the intensely murderous aura caused them all to look up.

Jin Yunshan, the Sect Leader, and all the others had returned from the necropolis. They still hadn't successfully made it to the ninth land mass. After their successive failures, they had been sitting cross-legged in meditation, but now, looks of shock could be seen on their faces.

Chapter 1517: Hunting Down Han Bei!

Jin Yunshan was shaking more than anyone. Once he realized who that killing intent belonged to, he subconsciously reached down and rubbed his bracelet of holding, whereupon he felt a bit better.

“It’s the Ninth Paragon...”

“This aura. How... how could he have become so strong?!”

“He’s been missing for hundreds of years, I can’t believe he’s finally back!”

Faces flickered as Meng Hao hovered there in the air above Planet Vast Expanse for a moment before speeding toward the first continent.

In the Holy Daughter Palace on the first continent, Vast Expanse Holy Daughter Han Bei was seated cross-legged in meditation. Her face was pale, and she looked exhausted. Suddenly, she sensed the aura emanating from above, and a smile broke out on her face.

But that smile quickly froze, and she shot to her feet, a look of disbelief and shock on her face.

“I can’t believe he woke up! This is impossible!” Trembling, Han Bei began to back up. Suddenly, the glow of teleportation sprang up around her, and she vanished. A moment later, an indescribable pressure descended and slammed into the Holy Daughter Palace.

The entire palace was instantly incinerated, wiped away. In its place was a huge crater, above which Meng Hao hovered, eyes flashing with killing intent as he looked off into the distance.

“You can’t escape!” he said through gritted teeth. “You will die this day. I won’t rest until that happens.”

Outside of the Vast Expanse, he had brushed far too closely with death, causing his hatred for Han Bei to seep into his very bones. He had vowed to slay her, and as far as Chu Yuyan was concerned, he was prepared for how to deal with that situation.

His eyes flashed like lightning, and then a massive boom echoed out as the air was ripped apart. Meng Hao's vicious, murderous aura spread out to cover the entire planet, joined by his divine sense. All living beings on the planet, including mortals and cultivators, even the 9-Essences experts, were left trembling. It was as if some great disaster had suddenly come to loom over their heads.

"What happened!?" Jin Yunshan gasped. He could sense the raging, murderous aura coming off of Meng Hao, and it was obvious that it was exponentially more powerful than the last time the two of them had tangled.

Jin Yunshan, just like the Sect Leader and the others, had made progress in recent years thanks to the multiple forays into the necropolis. The entire group had experienced increases in their cultivation bases. By this point, Jin Yunshan believed himself to be at the utter peak of the 9-Essences level. And yet, now that he sensed Meng Hao's energy, his face fell, and he had to admit that as of this moment, Meng Hao's aura was completely and utterly terrifying.

"Why is he trying to kill a disciple from the First Sect?" Although Han Bei was a Holy Daughter of the Vast Expanse School, in comparison to a 9-Essences expert, she was nothing more than a disciple. "That's not any ordinary disciple. Whoever it was managed to escape before he landed his blow on the First Sect!"

Jin Yunshan's eyes flickered as he emerged out in the open. He wasn't going to interfere with Meng Hao; he merely wanted to see exactly what was happening.

It wasn't just him. Sha Jiudong emerged from a sandstorm that raged in Planet Vast Expanse's huge desert, looking extremely frightened. He took a deep breath, and his eyes flashed because of the uneasy feeling he was experiencing. He could tell that something bad was about to happen, and immediately sped off to observe.

Immortal Bai Wuchen hesitated for a moment. At the moment, she didn't dare to show herself to Meng Hao, not in his current state, so she

simply sat there quietly, pretending that she hadn't noticed his aura.

She was the only one who didn't show herself. The Sect Leader and the other 9-Essences Paragons were all flying through the air of Planet Vast Expanse to see what was happening.

Their hearts were pounding from the sheer awe-inspiring nature of Meng Hao's aura, which left them completely shaken.

That was especially true of the Sect Leader, whose cultivation base was so high that he had assumed he must be at the absolute pinnacle. He was even sure that he would prevail against the combined forces of Jin Yunshan and the other 9-Essences Paragons.

But as of this moment, Meng Hao's aura left him terrified. The intense level of pressure was almost impossible to accept.

"How... did he become so powerful!?" the Sect Leader thought. "It's understandable that our cultivation bases rose, thanks to the altars in the necropolis. But he simply vanished for a few hundred years, and now that he's back, he's suddenly unimaginably stronger!"

The Sect Leader's eyes flickered, and he pushed forward with greater speed. After all, disciple Han Bei of the First Sect was actually his apprentice.

He had accepted her as his only apprentice, and now Meng Hao was trying to chase her down and kill her.... Clearly, there were secrets at play.

As everyone was speeding toward the first continent, Meng Hao suddenly appeared in a different location, a place where the aura of teleportation was strong. This was none other than the location Han Bei had teleported to.

It was a small-scale sect that was not directly subordinate to the Vast Expanse School. As soon as Meng Hao appeared, everything was thrown into a commotion. The sect itself was built upon nine different mountains, all of which began to shine with bright light. Clearly it was a spell formation. In addition to that, a moment later, nine blasts of sword qi to suddenly shoot out toward Meng Hao.

The lands in the area shook as the nine mountains themselves then rose up into the air. There were also hosts of cultivators, whose eyes shone red, and who didn't even seem in control of their own minds as they charged madly toward Meng Hao.

Han Bei had been on Planet Vast Expanse for many years, and had always been on guard against Meng Hao. Although she had grown a bit lax recently, her preparations were all still in place.

This was one of the locations she had set aside especially to deal with Meng Hao.

"Kill him!" roared the tens of thousands of cultivators. In combination with the spell formation, the nine mountains, and the nine beams of sword qi, they shot aggressively toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's eyes flashed, and his killing intent surged stronger than ever. Since these people were trying to stop him, that meant they were allied with Han Bei, and thus, were his enemies!

"Die!" he said impatiently, shoving his hand out violently. Everything went dim, and a gale force wind blew as a huge hand materialized.

The hand slammed into the nine streams of sword qi, which were powerful enough to cause problems for an ordinary 9-Essences cultivator for at least a short time. But when they slammed into the magical hand sent out by Meng Hao, they shattered instantly. They weren't even powerful enough to stand up to a single blow.

Rumbling sounds echoed out as the sword qi was destroyed. Next, the hand slammed into the mountains. The mountains shook as cracks spread out across them. Then, they exploded into countless fragments. The entire matter happened almost in the blink of an eye.

The hand didn't seem to have been slowed down in the slightest. It smashed into the cultivators and the spell formation, causing a deafening boom to spread out.

A huge handprint was smashed into the ground, surrounded by cracks which snaked out in every direction. The spell formation was completely

destroyed, and the cultivators who had been charging in attack were reduced to a bloody pulp.

Everything went quiet. If Meng Hao had been an ordinary 9-Essences cultivator, this little trap might not have resulted in his death, but would have at least delayed him a bit. And what Han Bei needed right now was time.

However, to the current Meng Hao, destroying this place was as easy as taking a breath.

His eyes flickered as he waved his hand through the air to locate Han Bei's aura. After some examination, he snorted coldly, then sent his divine sense out in all directions. However, he could find no trace of Han Bei.

"Parrot!" he said anxiously.

The parrot flew out from his bag of holding, radiating dazzling light, its eyes shining brightly. Meng Hao sent his divine sense out again, and this time, the parrot let out a squawk as it bolstered his divine sense.

Everything began to tremble violently. RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

A huge wind whipped up, with Meng Hao in the middle of it all. As his divine sense surged out exponentially, it filled Planet Vast Expanse, until finally, he caught sight of Han Bei in another small-scale sect.

As soon as he locked down onto her position, he stepped forward, ripping the air apart and stepping through the rift. It took only a moment for him to appear in the exact location he had just identified.

The instant he appeared, Han Bei was stepping onto a teleportation portal in the sect. She suddenly looked around to find Meng Hao speeding through the air toward her.

Her face went pale, and she suddenly slapped down at the spell formation with her hand. A boom echoed out as the spell formation began to activate. At the same time, she declined to wait for Meng Hao to destroy the preparations she had made in the sect. She destroyed the entire sect herself, then borrowed that power to fuel the teleportation formation. Radiant light glittered, surrounding her. She began to fade away, as if she

would be teleported away at any moment.

But how could Meng Hao let that happen? He extended his right hand and pointed his finger directly at Han Bei.

“Eighth Hex!”

Chapter 1518: Nearing the Ninth Reincarnation!

Rumbling sounds echoed out as the Essence of space of the Eighth Hex descended and locked everything in place. Space was sealed, the air was sealed, everything was sealed!

Even the beam of light lurched to a halt. Meng Hao strode forward, completely ignoring the light and the destructive power that filled it, as he stepped inside.

The light washed over him, distorting a moment before being blasted away. Meng Hao stepped onto the spell formation, reached out, and grabbed the half-transparent Han Bei.

Almost as soon as his hand latched onto her, she laughed bitterly.

“If you kill me, Chu Yuyan dies!” she shrieked. Even as her words echoed out, and before she could speak another sentence, Meng Hao’s face turned icy cold. Without the slightest hesitation, he snapped her neck.

Han Bei couldn’t believe what was happening as a boom rang out and she exploded into a haze of blood and gore. She had been destroyed in body and mind.

“This isn’t your true self,” Meng Hao said coolly, “only a tool to be discarded, or perhaps a clone to be used as a seed for rebirth.

“Now that I’ve killed this body, I’m curious to see what other means you will use to try to evade my wrath.” He closed his eyes as he followed the aura of Han Bei’s flesh and blood to try to track her down yet again.

Han Bei was crafty to the extreme, and had prepared many life-saving backup plans. Strangely, even Meng Hao was having trouble detecting the signs of where exactly she had teleported away to.

He had followed various clues to this place, and found her clone. Han Bei was certainly clever. Clearly, her true self and her clone had fled in different directions. If Meng Hao ended up following her clone, then that

would suit her plans nicely. If he followed her true self, then the clone could make its escape and be the seed for rebirth if he ended up killing her true self.

“Gotcha,” he said, eyes flickering as he looked off into the distance. There, his divine sense had spotted a figure who hadn’t been there moments ago.

It was the fleeing figure of... Han Bei’s true self!

Her hair was in disarray, and her face was ashen. She seemed shocked, in disbelief, as if she could never have imagined that Meng Hao would have the mental fortitude to survive and track her down from outside the Vast Expanse.

It really seemed impossible to her. No one could survive the experience of going outside the Vast Expanse, especially not... Immortals who had transformed into Demons!

“He wasn’t assimilated and wasn’t consumed. He’s still himself. He didn’t become the Emissary of Allheaven! How did he do it? Dammit!!” A tremor ran through Han Bei as she thought about Meng Hao’s raging, murderous aura. She could well imagine that Meng Hao’s heart was completely fixed on the notion of slaughtering her.

Furthermore, she had no desire to test out whether Meng Hao had slipped into a state where he didn’t care about Chu Yuyan’s soul. If he had, Han Bei knew that he could kill her as easily as flipping over his hand.

“There’s no way he doesn’t care about her!” she thought, gritting her teeth. As she flew along, suddenly, one of the cities of the mortal world appeared in front of her!

When Meng Hao realized what direction she was flying in, his pupils constricted. Beyond the mountains on the horizon was the city where his clone’s ninth reincarnation was living. There, on the sprawling plains, was the enormous capital city of the mortal empire.

Meng Hao had very little connection to this ninth reincarnation. He

could sense him, but that was all. And yet, that sensation allowed him to pinpoint exactly where the clone was located.

That didn't help him to check the clone's current situation though. Not even divine sense revealed anything more than a blurry haze. However, he could sense a familiar aura brewing within his clone's ninth reincarnation.

It was the complete aura of the Ninth Hex, an aura which could change all lives in unpredictable ways. It was an aura that could cover over all life, that twisted the air, making divine sense impossible to penetrate the area.

"How does Han Bei know where my clone's ninth reincarnation is? Could it be just random chance?" His eyes glittered brightly.

Of course, he had no idea that Yan'er had become a part of his clone's ninth life. It was only because Han Bei was connected to Chu Yuyan's soul that she was going in that direction. She had no idea of knowing that his clone's reincarnation was obscuring the divine sense in Chu Yuyan's area. However, she was able to determine the general location.

And therefore, she was speeding there to try to track Chu Yuyan down!

Even as Han Bei sped along, Meng Hao let out a cold harrumph, and blurred into motion as he gave chase.

Rumbling sounds filled Heaven and Earth. Han Bei was moving so quickly that she was soon in the air above the capital city where the clone's reincarnation lived.

"This must be the place!" she thought, face gleaming with delight. This was her final life-saving backup plan. She knew that even if she fled to the farthest corners of the Vast Expanse, Meng Hao would still be able to track her down. Furthermore, because of the injuries she had sustained, it was impossible for her to safely summon the will of Allheaven upon her. Therefore, her final chance at survival lay with Chu Yuyan.

She hoped that, in the case that Meng Hao had lost himself in his hatred, suddenly seeing Chu Yuyan in the flesh would awaken him.

Unfortunately, even though she knew Chu Yuyan's general location, she couldn't pinpoint exactly where she was. She only knew that she was in

this city, which was somehow covered with a blanket of obscurity.

However, she had no way of knowing that the closer she got to her target, the stronger Meng Hao's killing intent grew. After all, how could he possibly allow anything bad to happen to his clone?

Even as Han Bei arrived outside the mortal city, sounds like muffled thunder filled the air. Suddenly, the air seemed to rip apart, and Meng Hao emerged to hover in front of Han Bei.

His eyes were icy cold, and his killing intent swirled madly. Han Bei suddenly shivered and began to pant.

Apparently, Meng Hao's appearance provoked a reaction from the clouds up above. More thunder crackled, breaking the clouds open and causing rain to begin to fall. Moments later, the lands were soaked in rain.

Countless mortal citizens in the city scurried about to get out of the rain; it was currently evening, and as the sky darkened, the rain began to fall even harder.

In a narrow alley in one particular corner of the city was a carpenter's shop. Little Treasure sat there, carving a piece of wood, relying on his memory to sculpt the shape he remembered. Outside, thunder rumbled, and the sound of rainfall could be heard. Normally speaking, those sounds would stir his imagination, and make him think about what it might look like outside.

But today, he felt uneasy, as though something important were about to happen.

Soon, he heard footfalls behind him. It was his wife, who sat down next to him and leaned on his shoulder. A smile broke out on his face, and suddenly, the uneasy feeling in his heart gave way to calmness.

His wife looked at him warmly and also smiled. Her belly appeared to be slightly swollen; a tiny little life was there inside, slowly growing....

Because of the blanket of obscurity, Meng Hao's true self was unaware of what had occurred in his clone's ninth life. At the same time, the person who had accompanied that reincarnation through life had no way

to detect the familiar aura which existed beyond that obscurity.

“If you kill me, Chu Yuyan’s DEAD!” Han Bei said shrilly. She was nervous, and very afraid.

Thunder crashed, and the rain fell. Meng Hao didn’t use his cultivation base to prevent the rain from touching him. He hovered there in the air, eyes swirling with killing intent, and as the rain landed on him, it turned into ice which fell down toward the ground.

Meng Hao looked over at Han Bei, then said, “The first time we met was when we went into the Black Sieve Sect’s ancient Blessed Land.”

His eyes flickered with memories. In the past, he would never intentionally take the time to indulge in nostalgia. But as the years went by, he grew more lonely, and then experienced the destruction of the Mountain and Sea Realm. Eventually, he reached the point where he would reminisce.

If it were possible, he would prefer that all of the people who had once been his friends not perish. That was especially true... of those he killed himself.

He felt that way about Chen Fan, and also felt that way about Han Bei.

Han Bei looked back at him quickly, eyes flickering with mixed emotions as she thought back to the past.

Then, Meng Hao’s eyes shone with bright light. What he had said just now had been seventy percent sincere and thirty percent duplicitous. He truly had been sighing, but the intention had been to cause Han Bei to think about the past!

In the blink of an eye, Meng Hao’s right hand flashed with an incantation gesture. Karmic Hexing appeared, and the wave of a finger caused Han Bei to begin to tremble. All of her Karma Threads appeared above her head, from which Meng Hao extracted a single thread.

It was none other than the Karma Thread which connected her to Chu Yuyan!

At the same time, Meng Hao's hand slashed through the air. The pieces of ice which had fallen off of him moments ago suddenly flew through the air, transforming into countless sharp blades that flashed through the air toward Han Bei. More precisely, they shot toward the Karma Thread which connected her to Chu Yuyan.

Han Bei's eyes widened, and she gasped. She immediately fell back, hands flashing in a double-handed incantation gesture. Then she shoved her hands out, unleashing the power of her cultivation base. However, she was not even close to being a match for Meng Hao. In the blink of an eye, the chunks of ice were directly in front of her and on the verge of slashing through her body.

In that moment, she shrieked. Her black pupils rapidly extended outward until they had overtaken the whites of her eyes. A boundless will then began to emanate out from her.

It was the will of Allheaven, and as it exploded out, blood oozed out of the corners of her mouth. She began to shake violently, and the sounds of breaking bones echoed out from inside of her.

Chapter 1519: Han Bei Perishes!

In order to send Meng Hao outside the Vast Expanse, Han Bei had paid the heaviest of prices. She had harmed herself on a fundamental level in order to summon the will of Allheaven. As such, when she did so again, she could barely prevent herself from collapsing into pieces.

However, even as her body began to fall apart, she was able to wield astonishing power. Blood oozed out of the corners of her mouth as her internal organs were destroyed. And yet, she raised her right hand toward the incoming ice fragments and pushed out.

Rumbling could be heard as the ice lurched to a halt. Then, each and every one exploded, forming a mist. That mist then congealed into the form of an arrow. Han Bei's eyes glinted with a cruel light as she prepared to send the arrow flying back at Meng Hao. But then her face fell as she realized that Meng Hao had vanished.

Before she could even spin around, Meng Hao had appeared behind her. She had no time to unleash any divine abilities or set up any defenses. Meng Hao's eyes flickered as he waved his right hand, summoning the copper mirror. It had a huge crack running down the middle, but it was still the same precious treasure it had always been.

The parrot materialized, letting out a fierce squawk. At the same time, the surface of the mirror floated out, and of the nine pieces which comprised it, one shot out and stabbed into the middle of Han Bei's back.

Even still, Han Bei's energy continued to rise, and the boundless will continued to pour into her. She performed an incantation gesture with her right hand, then pointed behind her, causing the air around Meng Hao to shatter. A blast of energy then separated them, whereupon Meng Hao vanished again. When he reappeared, he was in a different location, where he waved his hand, sending a second mirror shard stabbing into Han Bei's forehead.

Blood oozed out of the corners of her mouth as she performed another incantation gesture. The lands below began to quake, and crevices snaked

out. However, that was when the third mirror shard stabbed into her, and then the fourth.

Han Bei's pupils constricted. She could already sense that the connection between her own soul and Chu Yuyan's was being destroyed. Backing up, she performed yet another incantation gesture. Blood sprayed out of her mouth, transforming into a blood-colored palm print that shot toward Meng Hao.

She was now in full retreat, drawing upon all the speed she could muster to flee. She was filled with the intense premonition that these copper mirror shards had the capacity to completely end her life!

However, even as she tried to escape, Meng Hao's eyes flickered with scorn. His right hand flashed with an incantation gesture, causing numerous mountains to appear, which fell down and completely blocked off her path of retreat. From a distance, it almost appeared as if those mountains were descending from the Heavens!

Han Bei let out a miserable shriek and then slammed into the mountains. The mountains shattered, and just when she appeared to be on the verge of making her escape, Meng Hao appeared next to her. He waved his right hand, and the fifth, sixth, and seventh mirror shards stabbed into Han Bei.

Han Bei's face was pale, and within her, the power of the will of Allheaven had exploded out in full force. She even went so far as to use the same magical technique that Chen Fan had used, causing numerous battles to fill Meng Hao's memories.

However, Meng Hao was prepared for that. His right hand flashed with an incantation gesture, and massive power erupted out within him. It was Karmic Hexing, which instantly severed her Karma.

Then, the eighth mirror shard stabbed into her chest.

She chuckled bitterly. By this point, her connection to Chu Yuyan's soul was almost completely gone. Glaring at Meng Hao, she gritted her teeth and, unexpectedly, chose to detonate her own soul!

“Maybe I’ll vanish forever,” she said, her eyes burning with madness, “but at least I can leave your heart in agony!” A boom echoed out as the power of the detonation began to explode out.

“Too late,” Meng Hao said coolly. He waved his hand, and the ninth mirror shard whistled through the air at an impossible speed. Han Bei couldn’t have blocked it even if she had tried. It stabbed directly into her dantian region.

“Soul Severing!” Meng Hao said quietly. The parrot squawked, shooting toward Han Bei at top speed. Simultaneously, the mirror shards exploded.

Meng Hao had set out completely intent on killing Han Bei. Even though her soul was linked with Chu Yuyan’s, after acquiring the copper mirror, he knew that he could separate the two of them. The main danger would be if Han Bei chose to self-detonate, which was something he couldn’t prevent.

Therefore, he didn’t immediately attack Han Bei with full force. Instead, he had intentionally talked about past times, all to provoke the flow of memories within Han Bei’s eyes. In that moment when she recalled the past, he unleashed Karmic Hexing as a tactic to sever her soul!

Severing Karma wouldn’t be enough to undo her fusion with Chu Yuyan’s soul. Everything he had done before had been a feint. His true goal was to use the copper mirror and the parrot to completely separate their souls!

The parrot’s squawk echoed out at the same time that the nine mirror shards began to explode. The parrot then pierced through Han Bei’s body, which was a simple thing considering it wasn’t using its corporeal form.

As it passed through her, it latched its beak down onto a strand of soul, which was none other than the piece of Chu Yuyan’s soul which was nestled inside of Han Bei’s soul. The blurry soul fragment began to stretch out as it was pulled inexorably away from Han Bei’s soul.

It was in that moment that the full power of the detonation of the mirror shards surged out. Nine separate explosions ripped through Han Bei, slashing at the point where the two souls connected. Han Bei let out a

bloodcurdling scream as her soul was severed from Chu Yuyan's.

A massive boom echoed out as the parrot soared through the air, circling back around to Meng Hao with Chu Yuyan's soul fragment. As for the mirror shards, they reformed and floated back to the copper mirror, where they once again became an intact mirror face.

As of this moment, Meng Hao's desire to kill Han Bei had not lessened at all. He shot forward to appear directly in front of her, whereupon he unleashed a fist strike.

A boom rang out as Han Bei's body exploded into a cloud of gore. Her soul flew out into the air, where she stared at Meng Hao, smiling bitterly.

"Meng Hao, you've really surprised me.... You truly deserve to be the Son of Allheaven. The blood of the Allheaven Clans runs strong in you.... However, your fate is sealed! The fate of all the starry sky of Allheaven is sealed! It can't be changed. Nobody can alter it!" She began to laugh bitterly. Her soul was so damaged because of calling upon the will of Allheaven that Meng Hao didn't need to do anything to it now. She was like an oil lamp on the verge of sputtering out. Her soul trembled as cracks began to spread out across its surface.

Soon, she was completely fragmented, and was apparently on the very brink of falling apart.

"Tell me, what are the Allheaven Clans?" Meng Hao suddenly asked.

"You know. You already know. What need have you of further proof...? Well, I guess it doesn't matter now. Allheaven Clans are forged from the bloodline of the will of Allheaven. They were scattered among the starry sky with the sole purpose... of helping the will of Allheaven to climb back to the pinnacle!

"In this life, I am the Daughter of Allheaven, and you are the Son of Allheaven. Things between us aren't over yet!" Her laughter grew louder and louder until her soul couldn't sustain itself any longer. A boom like thunder echoed out as she exploded into ash!

Meng Hao hovered there quietly. After returning from outside of the

Vast Expanse, he had already come to many conclusions about certain matters. Sighing, he looked up into the Heavens, his eyes glittering.

Eventually, Jin Yunshan, the Sect Leader, and the others appeared. They hovered there quietly, hearts battered by waves of shock. The bizarre performance put on by Han Bei, the unexpected appearance of the will of Allheaven, and Meng Hao's incredible power left them all panting.

Eventually, they clasped hands and bowed to Meng Hao, then began to depart in beams of colorful light.

The last to leave was the Sect Leader. He looked at Meng Hao with mixed emotions, then glanced thoughtfully at the spot where Han Bei had vanished. Finally, he clasped hands and left.

After they were gone, Meng Hao looked down at Chu Yuyan's soul strand. The parrot was perched on his shoulder.

After a long moment, Meng Hao murmured, "Han Bei was right. I've known the truth for some time now.

"There is a will outside the Vast Expanse called Allheaven.... In the past, Allheaven created the world, created life, and created cultivation. He is like the lord of all things.

"But he grew weak, and eventually reached the point of death. His body began to vanish, and in the end, all that remained were five fingers.

"Those fingers represent the Immortal, the Ghost, the God, the Devil, and the Demon...

"Every time one of them appears, it pushes Allheaven closer to death. Those fingers represent his life, an entity which exists above the Heavenly Dao, and is the will of all things.

"As for why Allheaven fears the Immortal, perhaps there are many answers, but regardless... if the Immortal appears, it will take the power of his life, and become strong to an unimaginable degree. In fact, if the Immortal appears, Allheaven will die instantly!

"When the Immortal is about to appear, worlds are destroyed!

“When Patriarch Vast Expanse was about to become the Immortal, the will of Allheaven intervened, and destroyed the Vast Expanse land masses. From then on, Patriarch Vast Expanse was not the Immortal, but instead, the Ghost. Back when I was fleeing with the Mountain and Sea Butterfly, I encountered that old man, and he told me all of this. Way back then. 1

“In Patriarch Vast Expanse’s grief, he transformed the land masses into his necropolis, then went outside the Vast Expanse to destroy Allheaven’s finger. That was all he could do, as he was not strong enough to kill Allheaven himself.”

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1. Meng Hao met the old man outside the vortex in chapter 1404.

Chapter 1520: Sculpt the Heavens!

“After that came the Devil and the God. They also destroyed one of the Allheaven’s fingers each. I wonder if the three of them were working together to completely destroy Allheaven, but just weren’t able to pull it off.

“In any case, they were waiting. Waiting... for the Demon to appear. I wonder where they got the idea that the Demon could put an end to Allheaven.

“Allheaven was waiting too, though, fearful of each person who approached the status of the Immortal, waiting for Demonic qi to appear inside of them. Then, just before they completed the process and became the true Demon... he absorbed those quasi-Demons, consumed them, used the multifariousness of the Demon, and their Nirvanic rebirth, to give himself new life!

“Perhaps the Allheaven Clans really were created by the blood of Allheaven, and yet, they were also clans which could give birth to the Demon!

“My fate is like that of a Demon, and I am the true Demon.” Meng Hao sighed. Perhaps his understanding wasn’t complete, but after everything he had experienced, he was sure that it was seventy to eighty percent true.

“That is the origin of Song Daozi and the other ninety-seven faces. They were from different worlds of the past, and they all became quasi-Demons.

“And I am the ninety-ninth. I was prepared by Allheaven to be the last of the group.” He shook his head and hovered there silently for a long moment. The rain ceased to fall, and the moon was now visible, hanging in the sky. As it cast its light down onto the lands below, the reflection cast within the puddles was the picture of beauty.

Meng Hao eventually made his way through the night into the city of mortals down below. Following the tuggings of his senses, he walked through the streets until he found himself at a certain street corner, leading into a small alley.

Deep within the alley was a small shop.

The door was closed, but based on the sign, and the woodpile outside, it was obvious that it was the shop of a carpenter.

This was the home of his clone's ninth reincarnation. Meng Hao stood there for a long time. The obscuring mist which seemed to cover the area was strong here, as was the sensation that something was brewing that could shake the Heavens.

After a long moment passed, Meng Hao sent his divine sense out in an attempt to see what was in the shop. However, that was as effective as throwing a stone ox into the ocean. He could see nothing.

A moment later, he vanished. When he reappeared, he was inside the carpenter's shop, looking around at the neatly arranged carpentry tools. There were also rows up on rows of little wooden sculptures, which left Meng Hao a bit taken aback.

There were birds, dogs, cats, all of them remarkably lifelike. They were so lifelike, in fact, that it seemed as if they might start walking around at any moment. They even seemed to glow with a faint light that no mortal would be able to detect.

It was the light of life... and it was very strong. It was like a life force that wasn't present in the wood itself, but which had been imparted unto it by means of the act of sculpting.

Meng Hao simply couldn't imagine what hands would be capable of sculpting such lifelike statues.

It was at this point that his eyes came to rest on one particular little sculpture, which depicted a woman. A tremor ran through him, and his eyes went wide. He almost couldn't believe what he was seeing; it felt as if lightning bolts were crashing in his mind.

From the look in his eyes, it was as if he were looking at something so outlandishly preposterous that it defied imagination.

"That's.... How is this possible? Why would my clone's ninth reincarnation have sculpted her...?" His heart began to thump as he

realized that certain shocking and irreversible developments must have occurred during this ninth life.

It was in that very moment that he heard footsteps behind him. A middle-aged man emerged from the room in the back of the shop. He was blind, and yet was able to walk as confidently as if he still possessed his eyes. He seemed very familiar with the little shop, as if had been carved into his mind. He walked over to the middle of the shop and took a sculpting knife off of the shelf, then sat down and began to work on an unfinished sculpture.

The sculpture wasn't even half complete, and although no one else would be able to see what it was, Meng Hao could tell at a glance that it was the ninth sealing mark of the Ninth Hex.

Little Treasure couldn't see Meng Hao, and didn't know that he was there with him. If a picture could be painted of the scene, it would depict Meng Hao standing there in front of his clone's ninth reincarnation, looking down at him slowly carving away at the block of wood.

A very strange feeling filled Meng Hao's heart as he watched his ninth reincarnation. This reincarnation was different from the others. From the second life to the eighth, Meng Hao had been able to observe what was happening, and even felt a sense of familiarity with the various reincarnations.

He could sense that this was definitely his clone; his soul and his blood had both come from Meng Hao. But this ninth reincarnation felt very unfamiliar.

Time passed in which Meng Hao simply watched the clone working with the sculpture. He had never seen the ninth sealing mark take shape in such a way, in such a clear and corporeal fashion.

It had always appeared as an outline in his mind and heart, but this time, in the hands of Little Treasure, it was taking physical shape in the world, one knife stroke at a time.

"So this is my final, ninth life...?" Meng Hao murmured. He stood there for a long time... until a woman walked out of the room. She couldn't see

Meng Hao any more than Little Treasure could, but as soon as Meng Hao saw her, he understood why Han Bei had been coming to this location.

“Yan’er....” he murmured to himself with a sigh. After seeing Yan’er depicted in the wooden sculpture, he had begun to suspect the truth. But to see her here in the flesh caused complicated emotions to rise up within him. Now he understood that in this ninth life, an unexpected twist had occurred. His clone... had ended up marrying Chu Yuyan.

Her belly was swollen with child, and her expression was warm as she placed a thick coat onto her husband’s shoulders. Then she sat next to him, watching him sculpt. From the way she watched him, it seemed she would never tire of sitting there like that, not for her entire life.

Eventually she looked down at the sculpture, and when she couldn’t tell exactly what it was, she quietly asked, “Is it almost finished?”

“Not yet,” Little Treasure replied, rubbing the wood gently. “It’s about a third done.”

She looked at it a bit closer, and then asked, “What exactly is it? I can’t tell.”

Little Treasure smiled and replied, “These are... the Heavens, as I see them.”

“The Heavens?” The woman looked a bit surprised.

“Yeah. These are the Heavens, with their eyes closed. Like me, unable to see.” Little Treasure sighed. Yan’er sat there quietly.

Suddenly, Little Treasure looked up, and although he couldn’t see Meng Hao, it was almost as if he were looking at him. “Yan’er, sometimes I have the feeling that this is my purpose in life.

“It was foreordained that I be blind, to live in a world of darkness.

“But I want the Heavens to open their eyes. It’s too bad that I can’t reach up and touch them.”

Meng Hao looked at Little Treasure and Yan’er for a long moment. Finally, he sighed and turned to leave. Before walking out of the shop, he

looked back at Yan'er, and the little bump on her belly.

He could sense the life inside, and although it was true that the child inside was the offspring of his clone's ninth reincarnation, it was also true that it was his own flesh and blood.

This ninth reincarnation was unlike any of the other lives, and this child was also different.

Meng Hao stood at the threshold of the door, his expression one of many mixed emotions.

He did nothing to interfere with the lives of Yan'er and Little Treasure. There was no need.

He had chosen to let both of them go, and therefore, he would not break them apart now.

Because of the matter of the Ninth Hex, this ninth reincarnation apparently had keen intuition, to the point where Meng Hao was left shocked. Not only was he actually carving out the ninth seal of the Ninth Hex, he had uttered words which were thought-provoking even to Meng Hao.

"How can you seal the Heavens without being able to see them?" he murmured, shaking his head.

"No. There's more to it than that. People think that he can't see the Heavens, but the truth is that in his world of blindness, he can see them.

"He is sculpting those Heavens, one knife stroke at a time. The ninth seal represents those Heavens!

"When that sculpture of his is complete, my clone's ninth reincarnation will close his eyes and pass away. The purpose of his life has been to sculpt that ninth sealing mark." Meng Hao walked quietly off into the distance.

He didn't leave the city of mortals. He bought a house some distance away from Little Treasure and Yan'er's, where he waited for his clone's ninth reincarnation to finish his work.

Eight months passed in the blink of an eye, and Little Treasure became father to a baby girl. She wasn't blind. She could see the world in all its multitudinous colors. Her bright, cheerful laughter often filled the house.

Her mother picked her name, a single character which meant 'Perfection.'

From the time she was born, her parents called her Perfect.

It was a bit of a strange-sounding name, but Little Treasure liked it, and so did Yan'er.

Little Treasure was extremely excited from the moment she was born. He often held his tiny daughter in his arms and laughed with joy. Later, he carved his daughter's likeness into wood, which he placed on the headboard of her bed.

A few years later, Little Treasure's daughter was eight years old, and the ninth sealing mark was about half finished. On that day, a white hair appeared on Little Treasure's head. Soon after, young Perfect snuck up behind him, then pounced on him, laughing with joy. Chuckling, Little Treasure scooped her up into his arms, and suddenly, Perfect spotted the white hair on her father's head.

"Daddy, you have a white hair! Don't move, I'll pluck it out for you." She reached out with her little hand, found the white hair, and plucked it out.

Little Treasure stroked his daughter's cheek and gave her a loving smile. He was happy, blessed even. The years continued to pass.

Chapter 1521: The Heavens Inflict Punishment!

A year later, in the dead of night, Little Treasure was in the middle of sculpting the statue that was the ninth sealing mark. Suddenly, the sculpture glimmered with a faint light; it was now half complete.

It was in that very moment that thunder rumbled in the sky outside. It filled the first continent, as if some powerful will were expressing its anger by roaring in rage. The Heavens seemed to transform into an eye which scoured the lands below it, as if it were searching for something. In the end, the eye vanished.

Even as the clouds above seethed, Meng Hao's true self was sitting in his home not too far away from Little Treasure. He slowly looked up into the sky, his eyes cold.

In that moment, Little Treasure couldn't shake the feeling that someone up above in the sky was looking down at him. He looked up, but of course, couldn't see anything.

That night, as the clouds churned, rain began to fall.

It fell, not just on that particular city, but... upon the entire first continent.

Rain was a natural occurrence, so people didn't pay much attention to it. The mortals didn't even care, much less the cultivators. But the rain continued to fall for a total of seven days!

Because of the unending downpour, some lowlying areas began to fill up with water. A disaster was unfolding. Soon, the mortal empire began to get nervous, and started taking measures to control the flood of water.

The rain didn't stop after seven days though. There was a brief respite with a bit of sunny sky, but then thunder boomed, and the rain began to fall again. It seemed to pour down without end. Rain fell for a second week, then a third, then a fourth....

Then a second month, a third, and a fourth....

Normally, a bit of rainfall was nothing anyone would worry about. But when the rain continued to fall for month after month, soaking the lands, completely inundating them, it was a completely different matter.

By now, it was a true disaster, to the point where the cultivators in the first continent attempted to intervene and stop the rain. However, not even the Paragons were capable of doing so.

The best they could do was create canals that led the rainwater to the oceans.

However, that was not a long-term solution. Furthermore, many of the cultivators who attempted to intervene would subsequently make critical errors when practicing cultivation, and then die.

It was almost as if they had offended the will of the Heavens, and were being punished with death.

The mortal world was completely saturated with water. The city Little Treasure lived in was no exception. Certain portions of the city wall were so soaked that they had collapsed, as had many buildings throughout the city. The citizens could do little more than brave the downpours to try to bolster their residences against the rain.

It reached the point where virtually no one was able to prevent the water from flowing into their homes. As the water rose, sickness and disease spread.

Little Treasure's house was one of the few in which it was relatively dry. He had no idea why that was the case, nor did his daughter.

Only his wife knew. She had taken certain measures to protect her family.

"When is this rain going to stop...?" Little Treasure said with a sigh. Because of what had been happening, business had ground to a halt. Thankfully, they had some food saved up, but if the rain kept on the way it was, that food wouldn't last for very long.

Little Treasure sat there quietly, sculpting away. With every stroke of his knife, another sliver of wood would fall, just like the rain outside.

More and more cultivators were mobilized. They began to set up spell formations and hew out canals. However, all that did was alleviate a bit of the pressure, not solve the problem.

It was in this fashion that three years passed.

During that time... the rain never stopped. People began to move to other locations on the continent as one village after another was swallowed up by water. Plains vanished, and eventually, even the city Little Treasure lived in sank beneath the waters.

Little Treasure and his family left with the other refugees, heading to higher ground. Along the way, Little Treasure's parents fell ill.

They were old, and had grown frail, and nearly lost their lives to the illness. However, just when it seemed hopeless, they made a sudden recovery. Little Treasure was delighted, although he couldn't see how ashen his wife's face was in that moment.

The rain fell harder. People died on a daily basis. Among all of the refugees who were traveling to higher ground, only Little Treasure and his family kept their spirits up. Furthermore, Little Treasure never stopped sculpting. Every day he would spend time working on his statue.

The exodus took a full year. Eventually, they reached a tall mountain, which gradually came to be packed with more and more refugees. Suddenly, the rain stopped. Everyone began to cry out in joy, only to feel a frigid wind blow across their faces, a wind which seemed to drain them of all warmth. In that instant, their spirits turned as cold as ice.

The rain had stopped. But the snow had just begun.

The temperature on the first continent dropped rapidly.

Snow began to fall, and Little Treasure shivered. He felt the snow landing on his face, and he could hear everyone around him crying out in alarm.

It was a depressing sound, a sound filled with death and despair....

Before, everything had been wet, but now, everything was freezing cold. This sudden change in the weather took the disaster to a new, unprecedented level.

Snow filled the lands, and the temperature plummeted. The ground froze over, and vile coldness reached its claws everywhere. Not even the canals could escape, and were frozen solid.

More cultivators attempted to interfere with the Heavens, but any who did would eventually drop dead with no warning. There was even an 8-Essences Paragon who, in the midst of attempting to stop the disaster, was suddenly blasted by a wind so cold it froze his soul, and he died instantly. After that, no one dared to do anything.

Because of the rain, and then the snow, the First Sect was uprooted and forced to move. According to their understanding, the Heavens had sent this disaster to destroy the first continent.

There was nothing that could be done. There was no resisting it. Even the Sect Leader could do nothing but shake his head bitterly. Furthermore, he had the feeling that the disaster was far from over.

The First Sect evacuated.

On that night, Little Treasure's wife Yan'er was looking up at the falling snow. She knew that the First Sect was leaving, and finally decided that it was time to take Little Treasure and their daughter away from the first continent. However, just when she was about to unleash some magic, the energy of Heaven and Earth that existed in the first continent vanished.

Just like that, all of the spiritual energy, all of the energy of the Vast Expanse, was suddenly gone, as if it had been cut off. Not a single trace was left behind.

Something shocking resulted because of the disappearance of the energy of Heaven and Earth. In that instant, all of the cultivators on the first continent gaped in shock. It was as if a huge pressure had suddenly descended onto them. All of their years of cultivation, all of their

cultivation base power, was gone. No matter how they fought or struggled to keep it... as of this moment, all of them fell back down into the mortal realm. They... were now mortals!

It was as if a huge blanket had been tossed over the lands of the first continent, making it impossible for anyone to leave, and also ensuring that no one dared to enter.

Any cultivator who cross the border into the first continent would instantly become a mortal.

The entire Vast Expanse School was stirred into action. All of the 9-Essences Paragons gathered at the borders of the first continent, which they stared at in shock. All of them were trembling deep in their hearts.

“The wrath of the Heavens!!” the Sect Leader murmured inwardly. He looked up into the Heavens, into the starry sky of Allheaven, and based on the level of his cultivation base, he could tell that, for some reason, the entire starry sky seemed enraged at the first continent.

At the same time, numerous cultivators who were proficient in prophesying and performing auguries began to call upon their skill to investigate. One after another, they were hit with backlashes that left them coughing up blood. And yet, they all came to the same conclusion.

“Punishment from the Heavens!”

“The Heavens are enraged!”

“Something happened which infuriated the Vast Expanse, right here on the first continent!”

“There is a power building up on the first continent, a power that the starry sky of the Vast Expanse views as an enemy!”

“We have to separate ourselves from that power. We have to seal this place off. Otherwise, the power might spread out from the first land mass and affect all of the starry sky!”

Such predictions and explanations only grew more numerous. Eventually, the first continent was completely sealed off.

All of the cultivators there who had lost their cultivation bases could do nothing but shiver as they looked in despair at the falling snow. Yan'er was among them. She smiled bitterly, and yet knew that there was nothing she could do to change the situation.

Little Treasure wasn't aware of how his wife had changed. However, he could feel death approaching. He knew the world had changed. It was unfamiliar now, and filled with rage and murder.

More people died. Violent chaos filled the lands. In the midst of a disaster like this, the worst side of people was what showed. That was how people survived.

The entire continent began to degenerate. As the snow fell and the temperature dropped, more people turned into corpses. The survivors could do nothing more than search for places to try to survive the cold.

Some survivors formed groups, which huddled together in caves in the mountains as they fought to live.

Food grew scarce, making it even more difficult to keep going. In order to get even a bit of food, many young women did things they would never have done before. People fought and killed others, and stories of cannibalism began to circulate.

Pretty women often had it the worst, so Little Treasure's wife, having lost her cultivation base, used a knife to disfigure her own face.

On that night, Little Treasure wrapped his arms around his wife and daughter, and they all wept together.

Chapter 1522: Oh How Cruel

In that moment, Meng Hao was floating in the air far up above. He was the only person on the first continent who didn't seem to have been affected by the sudden disappearance of the energy of Heaven and Earth.

He looked down at the ninth incarnation of his clone, a complex expression twisting his face. He looked down at Yan'er with her disfigured face, and Perfect. He looked at the family down below, and after a long moment passed, he sighed.

At the moment, he still felt that the best thing to do was refrain from interfering.

A few months passed. Little Treasure, despite being blind, was very skilled in carpentry, which was a valuable skill in the frigid world in which they lived. Because of that, he was one of the few people among the refugees who was permitted to live inside the cave on the mountain where they resided.

There was little to eat, so Little Treasure slowly began to lose weight. It was the same with his wife. She was no longer beautiful like she had been, and her hair was plastered onto her like a wilted flower.

The truth was that in these deadly and critical times, Yan'er had the option of living a much better life, if she wanted. Despite having lost her cultivation base, her body still retained its regenerative powers, and as such, despite having disfigured herself, she soon recovered, and was beautiful just like before. A beautiful person like that could easily find ways to have a nice life, despite the disastrous state of the world.

Instead, she chose to disfigure herself again, and continued to do so each time she recovered. She would rather stay with Little Treasure and her daughter. They were her family.

It was just like the year when she had first laid eyes on Little Treasure, and realized that he was the reincarnation of the Master she had been searching for. Just as she had then, she murmured, "I'm here to protect you...."

Time passed, and things only got worse. It was so cold that people who stayed outside of the caves for too long would often freeze to death. Eventually, Little Treasure stopped doing any woodworking at all. He focused only on sculpting the ninth sealing mark. That was his focus, his obsession, his purpose in life. He never stopped.

He had already had a relatively low position among the refugees in the cave. Eventually, the most vicious people among the refugees decided that a carpenter wasn't very useful, and Little Treasure's situation got worse.

Despite her scarred face, Yan'er had a very attractive body, which made things even more difficult considering that they were surrounded by bored and tormented individuals who were losing touch with their humanity.

Worst of all, their daughter was now sixteen years old.

One night, Perfect went missing.

On that day, Little Treasure trembled. He felt as if his world had collapsed. His wife was also left trembling. The two of them left the cave to search for their daughter.

"Perfect...."

"Perfect, where are you...?" They called out miserably as they searched. Little Treasure couldn't help but think back to the time he had been alone in the woods, and had wept in fear and anxiety. He was scared now too, but he forced his thoughts under control and reminded himself that he was searching for his daughter.

Eventually, he and Yan'er split up. He kept his hands on a wall, which he followed along, simultaneously calling out for his daughter. Eventually, he could tell that the sun was rising, and yet he hadn't found a single clue.

No one helped them search. The others in the caves simply looked at them coldly.

"Perfect... My Perfect...." A bitter smile twisted Little Treasure's lips as he continued to search for his daughter. Yet even his wife couldn't find her, let alone him, a blind man. He couldn't see the world, and as of this moment, felt more useless than ever. Completely useless....

Then he heard a miserable cry, a cry filled with despair. It was a cry that seemed to come from the lips of someone who wished to end their own life. It wasn't Perfect's voice, but rather, his wife's.

A tremor ran through Little Treasure. Although his eyes were sightless, they were still bloodshot. He immediately began to walk toward the sound, which wasn't too far away from where he stood.

He began to run. He fell. He hit his head on rocks. He was soon bleeding all over. But he continued to run. When he reached the voice, he heard a sinister laugh.

"Damned slut. You're pretty ugly, but I've taken a liking to you, hear me? It's your lucky day! Give me what I want and I'll give your family a kilo of meat. What do you say?"

Up ahead, Yan'er was holding a dagger up to her own throat. She had been backed up against a cliff face by three burly men. If she had her cultivation base, she could kill them with a mere glance. But now, she was nothing more than a frail mortal woman.

Tears welled up in her eyes as the men inched closer. She bit her lip, and was just on the verge of killing herself, when she saw Little Treasure lurching her way, covered in blood.

She wasn't the only one who noticed. The three burly men turned and started laughing.

"The blind man's here! Great! You two grab him. Alright, listen up, bitch. Be a good girl for daddy, otherwise I'll boil your husband in front of your own eyes and then eat him!"

Yan'er looked over at Little Treasure, and the dagger she held trembled. As two of the men walked forward to grab Little Treasure, the other one grinned viciously and closed in on Yan'er.

It was at this point that Little Treasure suddenly smiled. It was a very vicious-looking smile, considering that his face was spattered in blood. He suddenly rose to his feet, seemingly bursting with strength. It was as if all the potential strength of his life force had erupted. His teeth ripped into

the neck of one of the men, who had been completely unprepared to be so viciously attacked by a weak blind person. He screamed, clamping his hands down onto the wound. Off to the side, the second man gasped.

Little Treasure's ear twitched, and then he pounced onto the screaming man, madly ripping one chunk of flesh after another out of him. The burly man who had been advancing on Yan'er let out a bellow of rage, and was about to leap into the fray, when Yan'er lunged and began to stab her dagger into his back over and over again.

The remaining man instantly fled, his face filled with terror.

The maddened Little Treasure had ripped so many bloody chunks out of the man's skin that he was now dead. Little Treasure stumbled forward until he found his wife, whom he wrapped up in his arms. Together, they wept.

They never found their daughter. When they returned to the cave, the other refugees looked at them with fear. In a world which seemed to have reached the end of days, people only feared ferocity and repulsiveness.

The more repulsive, the more terrified they would be.

Later, people told them that during the previous night, a group of young men had kidnapped Perfect and taken her away.

Originally, it had been assumed that Perfect would never be seen again, whereas the young men would. However, after day broke, even the young men didn't return.

As for what exactly had occurred, people had their suspicions, but no one knew for sure.

Of course, nobody in the caves knew that at the bottom of the mountain, in another set of caves, a group of four corpses was already growing cold.

They were four young men, whose faces were plastered with expressions of terror and disbelief.

At first, Meng Hao had decided not to interfere with the life of his clone's ninth reincarnation, not even when it came to his relationship

with Yan'er. But as time went on, and the ninth reincarnation's life changed, Meng Hao started to waver.

Then, Perfect was kidnapped by the four young men, and Meng Hao simply couldn't stand idly by. After all, the daughter of the ninth reincarnation was also his own flesh and blood.

He took Perfect away to the ninth continent. Meng Hao was the Ninth Paragon, leader of the Ninth Sect, and with that status, all he had to do was tell the other Paragons of the Ninth Sect that she was his daughter.

That ensured that Perfect would have a respectable status for the rest of her life.

As for the ninth reincarnation, the purpose of his life was to complete the Ninth Hex. And Yan'er was an adult who could make her own decisions. She had her own Karma.

But Perfect was innocent, and didn't deserve to be subject to such bitterness on the first continent.

Meng Hao looked warmly at Perfect, then turned and left the Ninth Sect. He returned to the first continent, and the caves. There, the day was growing brighter.

From that moment on, things changed for Little Treasure and Yan'er. They had shown their vicious side, especially Little Treasure, who despite being blind, had ripped a man to death with his teeth. When people saw the corpses of the men they had killed, they gasped.

The small group which had previously bullied Little Treasure was left completely shaken and afraid.

In the days to follow, Little Treasure and Yan'er eventually learned of the four corpses in the other cave. Other people confirmed that those were the four young men who had kidnapped Perfect.

They had been dead for some time, and yet there was no trace of Perfect. It was as if she had simply vanished.

Although it was a bitter end to the matter, at least Little Treasure had

hope. For some reason, he was convinced that Perfect wasn't dead, and was in fact more blessed than she had ever been.

Because Little Treasure was blind, he couldn't see the look on his wife's face as they stood above the corpses of the four young men. At first she looked confused, and then, somewhat dazed. She wasn't sure who had rescued Perfect, but was convinced that whoever it was had been a very powerful person. Despite the fact that the current state of Heaven and Earth made it impossible to unleash one's cultivation base, that person must somehow have been able to leave the first continent.

In that case, it meant that Perfect was most likely safe.

However, the entire matter was still a heavy blow to Little Treasure. He was struck with a deadly illness which rapidly deteriorated his body.

When the end of days struck the world, falling ill was like a sentence of death. Yan'er worked herself to the bone to take care of him. A year later, he actually recovered, but by that time, Yan'er was like skin and bones.

The truth was that without his wife, Little Treasure would definitely have died.

He had never been inclined to words, but after his illness, he spoke even less. Most of the time, he focused on sculpting. He had been working on the sculpture for decades now, to the point where it was as smooth as glass and as dark as night.

Chapter 1523: My Destiny!

He continued to sculpt. One knife stroke at a time. The statue was gradually taking shape. Another decade passed. It was now ninety percent complete, and the world outside was colder than ever.

The wind blew, and food grew even more scarce. Even the caves got colder and colder. It was not uncommon for people to fall asleep and never wake up.

Things got worse until the caves were little warmer than the outside. Things began to freeze over, and soon, there was so much ice that the people left had only one choice. Stay and die, or leave the caves and try to find some other place to live.

The first group of people who left never returned. Then a second group left, and a third....

One morning, Little Treasure woke up to a very strange feeling. He reached out to touch his wife and realized that she was very stiff. He began to massage her, eventually holding her in his arms, until she finally awoke. He knew why she was like this: at night, she would lay next to him in such a way that the wind didn't blow on him.

After a moment of silence, Little Treasure said, "Let's leave this place!"

A few days later, the fourth group of people marched out into the wind and snow. The world was completely white as they searched for another location to hunker down in. Three days later, an avalanche suddenly struck, burying the entire group.

Meng Hao hovered in midair up above, looking down. By this point, he had suppressed the impulse to intervene on too many occasions to count. But now, he really felt as if he had no choice. He was just about to do something when his jaw dropped.

Down in the snow, one area began to shake, and then a woman crawled out. It was Yan'er. She was a cultivator, so despite having lost the use of her cultivation base, her body was a lot tougher than a mortal's.

Despite her weakened state, she was able to drag a person with her out of the snow, which was the unconscious Little Treasure. Within the world of ice and snow, everything was quiet. Yan'er wrapped her arms around Little Treasure to warm him up, then slung him over her shoulder. Looking around blankly for a moment, she then began to trudge onward.

Meng Hao felt deeply and profoundly shaken. Yan'er was very weak by this point, but she used what energy she had to press on with determination.

She walked for three days, during which time Little Treasure lapsed in and out of consciousness. His skin was very hot, although not from fever, but rather, because he was on the verge of freezing to death.

Tears leaked out of Yan'er's eyes. She called out to him, and held him close to keep him warm. Little Treasure's aura was growing weaker and weaker.

By this point, Meng Hao could even see his soul was on the verge of emerging. That told him that his clone's ninth reincarnation was reaching the end of his life. Eyes glittering, he extended his finger toward the clone.

But then he suddenly stopped, and his hand quivered. There was something pushing back against him, making it impossible for him to interfere.

Furthermore, Meng Hao could sense that the eight complete sealing marks had suddenly cracked. Apparently, if he did anything more to interfere, they would be destroyed, and the ninth sealing mark would also completely vanish.

Meng Hao sank into his silence. Although this was his first time attempting to take control of the ninth sealing mark, he had long since anticipated that something like this might happen.

"Is it all a failure...?" he thought, gazing blankly at Little Treasure's soul as it struggled to emerge and fly away.

However, it was at this point that Yan'er did something that completely shocked Meng Hao. She looked at Little Treasure's ashen face, and at his

chest, which was barely rising and falling. A tender expression appeared in her eyes.

“Master, I love you,” she murmured. “I loved you in my last life, and it’s the same in this one....” She lifted her wrist up to her mouth and bit down hard. Then she lowered it down to Little Treasure’s mouth, allowing the blood to flow into him.

Her own blood was the warmest part of her.

The wound closed up a moment later, so she ripped open another gash. The pain meant nothing to her. As long as the hot, nourishing blood could help Little Treasure to recover, she was willing to do it. Little Treasure’s destiny hadn’t been fulfilled, nor was he dead. So she picked him up and struggled back to the caves where they had lived for so many years. After they arrived, she collapsed into unconsciousness.

A few days later, Little Treasure woke up. He couldn’t see his wife, but he knew that she had saved his life yet again.

In his bitterness, Little Treasure began to weep. Eventually, Yan’er wrapped her arms around him, and the two of them sat there in the coldness of the cave, feeling each other’s’ warmth.

After some time passed, Little Treasure suddenly reached up and began to pat his clothing. When he didn’t find what he was looking for, he began to tremble.

The wooden statue was gone.

It was more than ninety percent complete, and had been with him for years upon years. But now, it was buried somewhere in the snow.

A moment passed. Little Treasure felt as if he had lost his soul. He sighed bitterly.

When his wife realized what had happened, she didn’t say anything. However, later that night, after Little Treasure had fallen asleep, she rose to her feet, straightened her clothes, and then walked to the mouth of the cave. After turning to look back at Little Treasure for a moment, she gritted her teeth and walked out into the snow.

She knew what her husband's destiny was.

She followed the same path they had taken when they left. Because of the blood loss, she was now very weak, like a flame that could be snuffed out at any moment by the freezing wind.

After walking for a few days she reached the place where the avalanche had struck. Then she began to dig. She dug and dug until her hands were stiff.

She dug up one corpse after another, corpses belonging to the group they had been traveling with. Her vision was swimming by the time she found the little wooden statue.

She smiled, put the statue into her garment, and then, fighting the urge to pass out, turned and walked back. A day later, she was getting hot, but was in much better spirits.

She began to walk faster, and continued to get hotter. Two days later, she reached the cave, and smiled. She wasn't even sure how she had returned. She entered, and as soon as she saw Little Treasure, she stumbled and fell into his arms.

"Little Treasure," she said softly, "I managed... to get your statue back...."

"I should stay to protect you, but I don't think I can...."

"Master, I... I love you."

Little Treasure trembled as Yan'er's aura faded away.

**

A few days earlier, Little Treasure had awoken to find his wife gone. He wasn't sure where she had left to, and considering he was blind, it wasn't really possible to track her down.

He could only sit there in the cave, shivering, paying close attention to the sounds he heard. However, all he heard was the whistling of the wind, and not his wife's footsteps.

He waited a whole day. Then another, and another. Soon he began to lose hope. Eventually, he began to chuckle bitterly, and recall that time in

the forest when he was a child.

“Why did I have to be born blind!?” He had always deceived himself into believing that it didn’t matter that he couldn’t see the world. But as of this moment, he hated the fact that he was blind.

“Everyone’s gone. Dad and mom are gone. Perfect is gone. And now you’re gone.... I’m the only one left....” Tears flowed down his face. His hair had long since turned gray. There he sat, an old man in a cave, crying alone.

He wasn’t sure how much time passed. First it was hours, then days. Eventually, he heard footsteps in the wind, very familiar footsteps. He began to tremble as he rose to his feet, and suddenly, she fell into his arms.

She was cold. Freezing cold.

“Little Treasure,” she said softly, “I managed... to get your statue back.....

“I should stay to protect you, but I don’t think I can....

“Master, I... I love you.”

Those three sentences struck Little Treasure like lightning. Trembling, he held her body, unsure of what to say. His throat seemed stuck shut, unable of emitting sound. His heart felt as if it had just been stabbed through.

He suddenly coughed up some blood, which splattered onto his wife’s body like crimson flower petals.

He thought back to the young woman he had met in the forest as a boy. He thought about the night they were married. He thought about how he had lifted her veil and touched her face.

He thought about the day Perfect was born, and how everyone had been so happy. He thought about how, when it started to rain, his wife stuck with him the entire time, even when he was sculpting. He thought about how sad he had been when his parents died, and how she had comforted him.

He thought about how she had cared for him when he was sick, and how

she blocked the wind with her own body. Finally, he thought about how she had nourished him with her own blood after the avalanche. That taste still seemed to linger in his mouth.

He held her in his arms for a long, long time. Eventually, her aura was gone, and yet Little Treasure didn't want to believe it. More tears flowed.

"It's fine, it's fine," he murmured. "I'm here. You rest for a bit. You're so cold, let me try to warm you up." Little Treasure carried his wife's corpse deep into the cave, where he tried to warm her with his own body.

Chapter 1524: Nine Reincarnations Together!

Unfortunately, no matter how he tried to warm her, he couldn't prevent her from becoming colder and colder. His anxiety grew, and his mind began to race. Eventually, he bit at his wrist and tried to pour his blood into her mouth. He smiled.

"It's fine. Everything's going to be fine," he murmured. Eventually, he passed out.

He was now alone in the cave. Everyone else had left. The only ones who stayed behind were the corpses.

After some time passed, he woke up again. He reached out to touch his wife, and she was as cold as ice. Little Treasure went mad. He ripped open his other wrist with his teeth to pour more blood into her mouth, but her mouth had frozen shut.

"Drink it," he murmured. "Drink my blood and you'll be fine! It's warm... Don't get any colder, please...." Tears streamed down his face as he babbled on. Eventually, he wrapped his arms around her corpse and wept.

The sound of his wailing echoed out in the cave until the wind rose up and drowned it out.

He was soon overwhelmed with a feeling of complete and utter loneliness. But then, strangely, he wasn't afraid any more.

He stroked his wife's face, feeling how cold it was, and softly said, "You know, back when we got married, I knew something that my dad and mom never knew. You're not a mortal. You're an Immortal."

His eyes had no pupils, and yet, they seemed to radiate warmth.

"How could I not know that the person who saved me in the forest was you?" He continued to stroke her face, wiping away the frost that was forming. From his expression, it was clear that he was thinking about the past.

“Back then,” he murmured, “I knew that you had to be one of those legendary Immortals, and yet, I couldn’t figure out why you would choose me....

“Sometimes when you were looking at me, though, I could sense that the person you saw wasn’t me....

“The person you truly loved wasn’t me, was it? It was your Master.

“I’m blind, unable to see the world that the rest of you live in. But the world that exists in my heart, is a world that none of you can see. And there is something about that world that no one could possibly know....” Little Treasure smiled as he talked to his wife.

“I’ll tell you, okay? I’ve never told anyone before, not even my parents....

“I’ve seen people before, in my world. They lived on different continents, and they lived different lives than mine. One was very happy, one was a businessman, one was a hunter. One of them wielded incredible power. Another was a coroner, and there was even an assassin....

“There was another person, an Immortal, and he had an apprentice named Yan’er. She looked a lot like you.” He smiled faintly.

“Do you know why I’ve been working on this little sculpture? It’s because all of those other people. All of them have been insisting that I have to finish sculpting it. I have to finish making this wooden statue. I have to force the Heavens open their eyes, or to close their eyes.

“Having the power to force them to close their eyes isn’t enough. What those other people want... is the power of absolute control over the eyes of the Heavens. To FORCE them to open their eyes. If I want the Heavens to close their eyes, they will have no choice but to comply!” Little Treasure chuckled. Stroking his wife’s freezing face one more, he turned his head and said, “Am I right?”

Although Little Treasure was blind, when he spoke those words, he was looking directly at a person. A person who was standing right behind him.

It was none other than Meng Hao.

Meng Hao looked down at Little Treasure, his eyes shining with bright, piercing light.

As of this moment, his heart was pounding.

The development he had most feared... had occurred.

Something had occurred which made it so that Meng Hao was incapable of controlling the ninth reincarnation of his clone. Perhaps there was something unique about the ninth reincarnation's body, or perhaps it was a result of using the incomplete eight sealing marks of the Ninth Hex when he was outside the Vast Expanse.

For whatever reason, Meng Hao had been very reluctant to interfere. Eventually, when he finally gave in and tried to do something, he met with resistance. And now, he found that something completely unexpected had occurred.

The ninth reincarnation was him, but obviously, had developed an independent mind. He was different from the previous reincarnations. He could not be controlled.

Although Little Treasure couldn't see the world around him, he somehow seemed to be looking directly at Meng Hao as he said, "I could sense a thread connecting me to all eight of those people who appeared in my world. And that thread connected to someone else, too.

"That person is you.

"My guess is that I am your clone. Yan'er's Master was also your clone. Am I right?"

After a moment of silence, Meng Hao said, "Yes. Both you and the other reincarnations you saw were created for a single purpose. To complete my Ninth Hex."

Little Treasure nodded thoughtfully. "So that's how it is. And what about her? Was she really your apprentice?"

Meng Hao looked down at Yan'er. Without her, this ninth reincarnation would have long since died. "She was the apprentice of my clone. In her

previous life, I came to owe her a huge debt.”

By this point, Little Treasure looked very, very old. “What about my daughter? Well, I guess she’s your daughter too, right?”

“She’s safe,” Meng Hao replied softly. “In the Ninth Sect on the ninth continent.”

“I guess we’ve reached the end of it all. I... have no last words to say, I suppose.” Little Treasure sat there quietly. After enough time had passed for an incense stick to burn, he reached down and pulled the wooden statue out from his wife’s garment. He rubbed the wood, and sighed.

“I really hate the idea of other people controlling my destiny. Even when that person is my true self. I still hate it.

“You know, I could sever the thread that connects the two of us at any time.” Little Treasure picked up his sculpting knife, and in that moment, he somehow seemed to possess the power to sever Karma.

If he did, then it wouldn’t matter if the Ninth Hex were completed, Meng Hao would not be able to even touch it.

Meng Hao stood there silently.

Little Treasure looked over at his wife, grief playing across his face. After a long moment, his knife moved. He didn’t sever the thread, but instead, began to sculpt the wood.

He cut with incredible speed, as if he were pouring all the power of his life into his work. Gradually, the eighth reincarnation appeared behind him, then the seventh, the sixth, the fifth... all the way to the first.

Nine reincarnations were all contained in one body. Together, they controlled the knife, causing the final sealing mark of the Ninth Hex to gradually take shape. Outside, thunder boomed. It seemed enraged, and its roars filled the world. Wind screamed, and snow battered the lands.

It was in that moment that Little Treasure’s knife stopped moving. The wooden statue was ninety-nine percent complete. It only required one more knife stroke.

“It’s difficult to perfect something I’ve never touched....” he murmured. Instantly, his soul, as well as the images of the other eight reincarnations, suddenly flew out of the cave. As the will of Allheaven roared up above, they shot high into the sky, touching the Heavens, feeling the will of Allheaven.

For the first time ever, the will of Allheaven trembled. For the first time, it felt fear. For the first time... it retreated.

That was Little Treasure’s aura, in the form of the eight incarnations. It was also a Heaven-Sealing aura!

That aura was the result of the nine perfected sealing marks. After combining, they formed the true... Seal the Heavens Hex!

As soon as it appeared, it spread out to fill Heaven and Earth. In the starry sky of Allheaven, the will of Allheaven which existed everywhere was now shaking, and the fear it felt continued to mount. Thunder boomed, and the clouds churned. It appeared as if the will of Allheaven were truly being forced to flee!

It was pushed out of the first continent, pushed out of the lands. The Seal the Heavens Hex might have seemed weak initially, but it actually existed on a completely different level than the other Hexes. In fact... it existed on a higher level than the will of Allheaven. It was a power that caused even that will to be completely shocked!

This was Meng Hao’s Ninth Hex, the Seal the Heavens Hex!

“I felt it,” Little Treasure said, smiling. He opened his eyes. All of the other reincarnations also smiled. Then, they merged together, transforming into a beam of light that shot back down to the lands below, back into the cave, to Little Treasure’s body. Then he lifted his knife to make the final cut on the wooden statue.

Boom!

The knife cut the wood, and the statue was complete!

The nine sealing marks of the Ninth Hex, the Seal the Heavens Hex, were, as of this moment... complete. The entire starry sky of Allheaven

began to shake and tremble. A tempest sprang up with Planet Vast Expanse at the center. It spread out, wider and wider, covering everything.

In that moment, the barrier which had surrounded the first continent began to fragment and crack. A moment later, it exploded, sending a huge shockwave out in all directions!

All of the snow on the first continent melted instantly, transforming into a mist that rose up into the air. The mist was then caught by the wind, and vanished!

The lands were restored. The plains appeared again. Mountains stood tall. Cities reappeared. Even the First Sect could be seen again.

At the same time, an indescribable power filled the lands, causing grass to sprout on the plains. The withered trees in the forests suddenly began to grow again, and all of the mountains became lush with vegetation.

Chapter 1525: Goodbye, Yan'er

Everything in the past which had died, regardless of whether they had frozen to death or drowned, regardless of whether they were cultivators or mortals, regardless of whether they were animals or plants, were all resurrected!

Even if the corpses had vanished, they returned to life from nothing!

The shattered buildings and collapsed mountains were restored in the blink of an eye. All of the lands... were like they were before!

According to the ancient saying, when one man achieves the Dao, all those beneath him will also ascend. That was exactly what was happening with the Seal the Heavens Hex. From within death, life appeared!

Rumbling sounds filled the first continent as everything was restored. As that happened, Planet Vast Expanse was shaken, as were all of the lands that filled the starry sky of Allheaven. All worlds, all realms, all the dust, everything was vibrating.

All cultivators, all species, all forms of life, everything that existed trembled in shock and astonishment.

Jin Yunshan gasped, and Sha Jiudong was left shivering. Bai Wuchen's eyes went wide with amazement.

The Sect Leader's jaw dropped, and all of the other 9-Essences cultivators were battered by waves of shock. Each of them felt compelled to drop to their knees and kowtow to the first continent. It was almost as if something were being born there... that surpassed the Vast Expanse itself!

In the first location where Meng Hao had acquired a copper mirror shard, the enormous basilisk lizard with the peak 9-Essences battle prowess was currently sleeping. Suddenly, it trembled and looked up, astonishment shining in its eyes.

In the Ice-Fire Realm, the Icemountain Giant and the Flamephoenix could feel the fluctuations rolling out through the starry sky of Allheaven,

and were suddenly struck with fear.

On the flourishing Immortal God Continent was a certain sect that held the most prominent position among all of the other sects. It was a powerful sect, and within that sect was a disciple by the name of Dao-Heaven, a new Chosen within the sect.

He was currently sitting there cross-legged in meditation. For years, he his heart had been filled with various questions and speculations. And yet, he had never been able to prove whether or not they were right. In fact, the ideas in his head seemed almost too fantastic to believe.

However, as of this moment, the entire Immortal God Continent suddenly trembled. Every entity in those lands stopped what they were doing and looked up. Mortals, cultivators, and even the animals, all suddenly seemed to lack the energy to even move. The entire world went completely still and quiet.

Except for Dao-Heaven. He could move. A tremor ran through him as he suddenly sensed a familiar aura. A smile broke out on his face, and tears began to stream down his cheeks. Finally, he threw his head back and laughed uproariously.

Dao-Heaven, of course, was the former Echelon cultivator of the First Mountain and Sea!

A similar scene played out on the Devil Realm Continent. It was the same in the 33 Heavens above the Mountain and Sea Butterfly. Outside the 33 Heavens, sitting there on guard, was the monkey Dao Fang, whose heart suddenly trembled.

In all of the starry sky of Allheaven, things were shaking, and rumbling like thunder could be heard.

At the same time, the will of Allheaven seemed to cause everything to shake with its rage. It roared in fury, as well as... terror!

It was terrified, because it could sense that a new aura had appeared within the starry sky. It was a new power, a Dao... that superseded the Heavenly Dao!

That Dao could be called... the Seal the Heavens Dao!

The Seal the Heavens Dao was boundlessly domineering. It refused to allow anyone to offend it. It refused to allow any other will to change it.

It... could make the Heavens open their eyes, and could make the Heavens close their eyes. If I want the Heavens' eyes closed, they won't dare to refuse!

What I want, the Heavens shall NOT lack! What I don't want, had BETTER not exist in the Heavens!

Back on Planet Vast Expanse, on the first continent, everyone was resurrected. However... Yan'er remained frozen.

After making the final knife cut, Little Treasure flicked his sleeve, and the statue and knife flew over toward Meng Hao.

As of this moment, his eyes were different. Before, they had no pupils, but now they did. He looked around at the world, and saw light. Of course, he didn't care about the world. He slowly looked down at his wife, and smiled. This was the first time he had ever seen her appearance.

She was ugly, her face covered with scars and wounds. But to Little Treasure, she was the most beautiful thing in existence.

He knelt down and wrapped his arms around her, smiling contentedly. Eventually, he closed his eyes, and his aura vanished.

His soul flew out. It, along with the souls of all the other reincarnations, became a beam of light that shot toward the statue in Meng Hao's hand. The light entered the statue, which then glowed brightly. It was now truly complete.

That wooden statue was Meng Hao's Ninth Hex. Once he absorbed it, he could... combine the Nine Hexes!

And yet, he felt no joy. It was hard to pinpoint exactly what emotions he felt as he looked down at Little Treasure's corpse, which was gradually transforming into motes of light that floated through the air and merged into Meng Hao. After all, he had been part of Meng Hao to begin with.

Meng Hao knew that Little Treasure could have refused to cooperate. Meng Hao was the true self, and he was the clone, a part that had essentially been cut out from Meng Hao.

He didn't like being controlled, didn't like others being in charge of his destiny. And yet, in the end, he chose to complete the Ninth Hex, and to help Meng Hao.

Of course, Meng Hao knew that he did it, not for him, but... for Yan'er.

This ninth reincarnation of his clone loved Yan'er much more than Meng Hao's true self did.

Meng Hao stood there in the cave for a long, long time. Eventually, the motes of light that were Little Treasure merged fully into Meng Hao. All traces of the clone's existence had been wiped out, except for the sculpting knife and the wooden statue.

Meng Hao sighed. Yan'er's body was also transforming into motes of light that gradually began to fade away. Her soul hovered there, complete and whole, just in front of Meng Hao.

She was looking at her fading corpse, and the empty spot next to it, where another person had been laying moments ago. Some time passed, after which she turned and looked at Meng Hao.

"Should I call you the Ninth Paragon?" she asked softly. "Or Master. Or... Little Treasure."

Meng Hao extended his right hand, within which were two soul strands. One was the strand which had been fused with Han Bei. The other contained memories of a previous life.

The two soul strands merged together into one, becoming a beautiful stream of light that flowed over to Yan'er.

"That is a part of your soul," Meng Hao said quietly. "If you absorb it, your soul will be complete, and you'll remember everything from the past. You will remember... who exactly I am."

Yan'er looked quietly at the beautiful light, a calm smile slowly growing

on her face. “What happened to Perfect?”

“She’s in the Ninth Sect.”

Yan’er nodded and looked off into the distance. Some more time passed before she spoke again.

“This ninth reincarnation was enough for me. What need is there of past memories? Now that I think about it, I’m sure that there are many regrets within those memories.

“All I know is that you are my Master, and that I lived a good life.” She closed her eyes for a moment, and when she opened them again, they were bright and clear. She waved her finger at the soul light, the light which contained the memories of her past life. The light faded away.

With that, she clasped hands and bowed to Meng Hao.

“This life is over. Master, I won’t interfere in your world any more. Thank you for caring for me throughout the years.” She looked at Meng Hao one last time, then turned away. In front of her, a reincarnation vortex appeared. Just as she was about to step in, she stopped in place.

“You promised to tell me the rest of the story of Chu Yuyan. But, I already know what happens.” She smiled and took a deep breath. She had long since come to the conclusion that she herself was the second half of Chu Yuyan’s story. Apparently, she had finally chosen to free herself from all burdens. What she had just said was no lie; she was content. Looking free and at ease, she waved at Meng Hao and then stepped into reincarnation.

To her, spending an eternity with the one she loved wasn’t necessary. She was happy with one lifetime.

Meng Hao stood quietly in the cave, eyes somewhat blank. The Ninth Hex was complete, but he didn’t feel happy at all. In fact, melancholy gripped at his heart.

After some time passed, he shook his head and buried his feelings deep inside. He walked out of the cave and felt the soft breeze on his face. It lifted his hair and rustled his garments, almost as if it were taking away

the bad memories with it.

A look of determination appeared on his face, and his eyes began to shine. His cultivation over the past thousand years, and all of the things he had experienced, had forged him into something even harder than before.

His face looked young, but if you looked closely, there was something about him that could only be seen on someone who had existed for many years, and seen many things. There were even some faint wrinkles visible around the corners of his eyes. He did nothing to conceal the changes.

“It’s time to go back....” He thought, looking up at the blue sky and the white clouds. Off in the distance was a red beam of light flying toward him. It was the mastiff, who landed in front of him and looked up quietly.

He stroked the mastiff’s fur, and the light in his eyes grew more incisive than ever.

“After I absorb the Ninth Hex and ensure that it’s complete, I can combine the Nine Hexes and extinguish the bronze lamp. Then I will Transcend. And after that... we can go home!” Although he didn’t speak very loudly, it was as if his voice merged with Heaven and Earth and spread out through the starry sky.

Back in the world of the Mountain and Sea Butterfly, a faint voice could suddenly be heard.

“I’m coming back!”

Chapter 1526: A Place to Transcend!

As his voice echoed out, countless people were left shaken. Xu Qing was sitting cross-legged in meditation. Her eyes slowly opened, and tears of joy rolled down her face.

Everyone had been waiting for hundreds of years, and at long last... the Demon Sovereign was going to return!

In the world of the Mountain and Sea Butterfly, Fatty, who was now the lord of an important sect, was in the middle of reprimanding some people, when suddenly a tremor ran through him. He then began to laugh until tears streamed down his face, to the bafflement of everyone else.

Somewhere deep within the world of the Mountain and Sea Butterfly was an area of extreme coldness. There, a middle-aged cultivator was sitting cross-legged, surrounded by freezing air. He looked very sinister, and his eyes were closed, although that was because he was blind.

Suddenly, a tremor ran through him, and his eyelids opened to reveal black pits. As he opened his eyes, a tempest sprang up around him, and a smile broke out on his face.

In another location in the Mountain and Sea Butterfly world was Li Ling'er, who continued to carry out Paragon Sea Dream's final wishes. After accepting Sea Dream's legacy, she had founded the Sea Dream Association, which had grown large over the past several hundred years.

As she sat cross-legged in the sect's secluded meditation facilities, she suddenly shivered, and her eyes opened. She looked up into the sky and smiled. Despite the fact that her hair was white with age, her smile was just as beautiful as always.

In another area was a house on top of a mountain, where Meng Hao's sister lived with Sun Hai. They had long since married, and had a son and a daughter. Their children were grown, and had borne grandchildren, making them their own little clan.

"Little brother is coming back," Fang Yu said, her eyes shining with

reminiscence.

Everywhere in the Mountain and Sea Butterfly, people were shaken, including one woman by the name of Zhixiang, who was smiling with anticipation.

There was another young man who happened to be seated cross-legged on the back of a huge whale, which was flying through the air. The young man was leaning up against a coffin, and he held an alcohol flagon in his hand, from which he sipped. A smile broke out on his face.

“He’s coming back, Night,” said the young man. He was Ke Jiusi, and the whale was true spirit Night.

There was a sect in the world of the Mountain and Sea Butterfly called the Kunlun Society. Back when the Mountain and Sea Realm was destroyed, the Kunlun Society had been preserved. They even managed to save many of their most important objects from within the sect, which they took with them into the Mountain and Sea Butterfly.

One of those objects... was a coffin, made from Immortal jade and filled with Meng Hao’s divine sense!

The highest mountain in the Kunlun Society didn’t have a sharp, jagged peak. Instead, it had a hollow depression at the top. Within that basin were countless spell formations, as well as piles of Immortal jade. In the middle of it, was that very coffin.

Inside the coffin was a very beautiful woman. Her eyes were closed, as if she were sleeping. It was none other than Chu Yuyan’s true self. Because of the power of Meng Hao’s divine sense, and the protective measures set up by the Kunlun Society, she had been preserved down to this day.

Even as everyone in the Mountain and Sea Butterfly who was familiar with Meng Hao sensed that he was coming, a white-haired old man was standing next to that coffin, looking at the woman inside. He was Pill Demon, Meng Hao’s Master, and also Master to Chu Yuyan.

Pill Demon gazed at Chu Yuyan for a while, then sighed. He was just about to turn and leave, when a tremor ran through him. He looked back

at Chu Yuyan, and for some reason, was convinced... that he had seen her eyelashes flutter.

Pill Demon gasped. “This....”

He looked closer, and although Chu Yuyan clearly wasn’t awake, he could definitely see... faint signs of life!

As everyone was shaken in the Mountain and Sea Butterfly, back on the first continent of Planet Vast Expanse, Meng Hao strode forth, his eyes gleaming with profound light.

The mastiff tagged along at his side, and moments later, the parrot flew out. As soon as it saw the mastiff, it whooped in delight.

“Woooo! Your fur is so luxuriant! It’s making me horny! Dammit, why do I feel like crying...?”

Meng Hao didn’t say anything in response. He returned to the ninth continent, and then the half-planet under the surface of the ground. Once he was back in Ninth Paragon City, he entered his secluded meditation facilities.

Unfortunately, he simply couldn’t shake the melancholy that had come to grip him after everything with Chu Yuyan. Some time passed, after which he subconsciously lifted his right hand and performed an incantation gesture, sending divine sense spreading out. After confirming that Perfect was doing well, he began to search for the signs of Chu Yuyan in reincarnation.

“She... didn’t reincarnate?” he thought, looking off into the distance. He wasn’t a completely heartless person, and although his heart was fully occupied with his desire for revenge, there were some emotions he couldn’t simply ignore. In his mind, the only person he actually owed anything to in this life... was Chu Yuyan.

For some reason, he thought back to the coffin which existed in the vortex, which the Mountain and Sea Butterfly rested upon. That coffin had a line of text written on it.

“The entire starry sky owes me a debt, and likewise... I owe you a debt.

You could awaken from slumber if you wished, but you do not ...” 1

Those words, and that concept, formed a resonance with Meng Hao. He sat there quietly in his bitterness for a long time. Eventually, he waved his hand, and the statue of the Ninth Hex appeared. After examining it for a bit, determination appeared in his eyes, and he sent his divine sense out in an attempt to absorb it.

However, in the instant he did that, the will of Allheaven which had just been expelled descended upon him in full madness.

His eyes flickered, and a vicious smile appeared on his face as he continued to absorb the Ninth Hex, and simultaneously resist the will of Allheaven.

A few days later, his eyes were bright red as he reached out and pushed his hand down onto the ground. A wind blasted out, and although nothing in the area was damaged or destroyed, it fought back against the will of Allheaven even more strongly. Eventually, Meng Hao's eyes were completely bloodshot.

By now, he realized that if he wanted to absorb the Ninth Hex in peace, he simply couldn't do it here. He might be able to force it to happen, but it was also possible that along the way, he could ruin everything.

Absorbing the Ninth Hex was too important to him, and he couldn't allow room for mistakes. After some thought, his eyes gleamed brightly.

“I need a place where the will of Allheaven cannot go. Only in a place like that will I be able to smoothly absorb the Ninth Hex.... The only place I know of like that is the necropolis!

“It seems a little trip to the necropolis is in order. If the will of Allheaven wants to get in there, it will have to fight against the necropolis and everything in it. And that includes...” Meng Hao thought about the first time he had visited the necropolis. He had heard a voice speak out from the ninth land mass, which cowed the will of Allheaven with a single word.

As he sat there, he examined the bronze lamp inside of him. Yet again,

he could sense the feeling of worship directed at him from the ghosts. The determination in his eyes grew stronger.

“To the necropolis!” he said, rising to his feet. He put the wooden statue away and flickered into motion, heading toward the half-planet’s teleportation portal.

Once he was there, he reached out and activated the portal, causing the power of teleportation to begin to build up.

Before the spell formation could fully activate, several beams of light shot through the air toward it. It was Jin Yunshan, Sha Jiudong, Bai Wuchen, the Sect Leader, and the other 9-Essences Paragons. Not a single one was missing.

These people were all as crafty as foxes, and had long since begun paying close attention to Meng Hao. As soon as they detected him activating the teleportation portal, it became obvious that he was planning to go into the necropolis, and thus they appeared.

They looked at Meng Hao with mixed emotions, looking shaken. The Sect Leader took a deep breath, then clasped hands and bowed.

“Fellow Daoist Meng, would you please permit the rest of us to come along with you? We’ve tried on multiple occasions to enter the ninth land mass, but have never succeeded. If you can open it, Fellow Daoist Meng, we hope you’ll give us a chance to go in too.”

He wasn’t lying. During the past several hundred years, they had never been able to get past the eighth land mass. They had tried every method they could think of, and had met with failure every time. They had finally reached the conclusion that the barrier separating them from the ninth land mass was something they would never be able to pass.

Although they weren’t sure why Meng Hao wanted to go into the necropolis, he was obviously completely determined to do so. After all the years they had practiced cultivation, and after everything they had experienced within the necropolis, they had developed certain speculations regarding how Meng Hao was connected to the terrifying aura they had sensed that one time on the first land mass.

The opportunity they had now was not something they would abandon lightly. Not only did the Sect Leader clasp hands and bow, all of the other 9-Essences Paragons, including Sha Jiudong and Bai Wuchen, all did the same.

Bai Wuchen was filled with bitterness because of it, but the prospect of Transcendence prompted her to acquiesce.

Only Jin Yunshan stood there, unabashed and arrogant. He waved his hand, causing a total of thirty bracelets of holding to appear, which represented virtually all of the wealth he had accumulated in recent years. Heart filled with pain, he gritted his teeth and waved his sleeve, sending the bracelets of holding flying toward Meng Hao.

“That’s my entrance fee!” he said coolly, sticking his chin out. He was completely confident in this action, and was even a bit derisive of how, even after all these years, nobody else understood Meng Hao like he did. As long as some money was thrown his way, he could accept anything.

Meng Hao’s face twitched as he watched the thirty bracelets of holding flying through the air toward him. He was inclined to reject such an insulting offer, but then he waved his arm, sucking the bracelets of holding into his sleeve and clearing his throat. He had to admit that, despite how much he had grown, and how cold he had become, insults like this were something he was happy to accept.

When the other Paragons saw what was happening, they were instantly enlivened. Without any hesitation, they began to produce various precious holding items, which they handed over. Most people offered ten or so, a few offered several dozen.

Meng Hao looked them over and even scanned them with divine sense. Despite his current level of battle prowess, he was still profoundly shocked by what he saw.

Both in terms of spirit stones and other precious materials, the contents were virtually impossible to count. Meng Hao couldn’t prevent his heart from leaping.

“I’m already at the peak of 9-Essences,” he murmured to himself. “The

most powerful under Transcendence. How could these people... be so insulting!?” After looking over the hundreds of precious holding items, he took a deep breath and smiled. Waving his sleeve, he collected them up, then coughed dryly.

“Fellow Daoists,” he said somberly, “considering how well you’ve cared for me in my time in the Vast Expanse School, I am duty-bound to take you into the necropolis with me!

“However, this incursion will involve great danger. If you still want to go in, though, and I’m able to open the way to the ninth land mass, then I’ll do everything I can to take you with me.”

Everyone else smiled and nodded. They weren’t worried at all about any dangers. After all the times they had been in the necropolis, they were used to that.

After a final look around, Meng Hao continued to power up the spell formation with the aid of everyone else present. The speed of activation immediately increased.

After a few breaths of time, the spell formation rumbled, and teleportation light shot up into the air. Even as that happened, everything on Planet Vast Expanse shook. The lands quaked and the seas churned as a powerful will descended.

*

1. The line of text on the coffin was revealed in chapter 1400.

Chapter 1527: Vast Expanse Leads the Defense!

The entire planet was shaking. All natural and magical laws, all space and time, all Daos, were utterly and thoroughly suppressed.

The descending will became the only thing that existed in Planet Vast Expanse. An endless mist spread out, such that if you looked at the planet from a distance, it looked like it was composed of nothing but mist. The entire planet was covered by it.

The will pervaded everything, like a Heavenly Dao. In the blink of an eye, it appeared above the half-planet, where it attacked the teleportation portal, blocking the teleportation power.

Everyone present was shocked, and couldn't help but feel that an incredible disaster was imminent.

Everyone began to cry out.

"What's happening?!"

"Who's attacking the spell formation?!?!"

"Is an army invading the Vast Expanse School? Impossible!"

Meng Hao's eyes flickered with killing intent. Obviously, the will of Allheaven had arrived to try to prevent him from entering the necropolis.

It was in that exact same moment that something like a voice echoed out within the minds of Meng Hao and the other 9-Essences Paragons.

"Any and all teleportations are prohibited!"

The voice was cold, emotionless, and stern. Other than Meng Hao and the Sect Leader, the entire group was left trembling. Sha Jiudong, Jin Yunshan, and Bai Wuchen all coughed up blood. Everyone else seemed to be on the verge of exploding. Their bodies were being shredded to pieces, gravely injured by a single sentence.

Blood oozed out of the corners of the Sect Leader's mouth, and Meng

Hao's eyes were shot with blood, although that was the extent of his injuries.

"Fellow Daoists, if we don't fight back, the danger will only escalate!" Meng Hao grinned viciously, waving his hand. The copper mirror appeared, instantly transforming into countless black threads. His suit of armor formed, and the Battle Weapon appeared in his hand, which he used to slash up at the sky.

A boom echoed out as Allheaven's descending will trembled. At the same time, an immense pressure began to weigh down. The teleportation portal itself even began to crumble apart.

Everyone, regardless of whether they were inclined to or not, had no choice but to unleash the full power of their cultivation bases. An explosion of energy occurred as all of them began to fight back against the will of Allheaven.

Boundless Essence power erupted out. Although they were being crushed by the pressure, these people were all 9-Essences cultivators, with some being at the peak of 9-Essences. Furthermore, all of them had benefited from eight chances to meditate on a Transcendence Dais. All of them had traces of Transcendence aura, which made it possible for them to resist the will which was arrayed against them.

Rumbling echoed out, and the spell formation trembled. The light twisted, and the lands shattered. The half-planet was shaking, and more cracks were spreading out across the surface of the teleportation portal. If it broke, then it would make it very difficult for the Vast Expanse School forces to enter the necropolis. The entrance would be sealed tight.

It was at this point that the descending will manifested in the blurry shape of a hand. The hand filled the sky as it bore down on the spell formation.

Everyone, even Jin Yunshan, looked up at it in despair. It was something they simply couldn't fight against, the will of the entire starry sky of Allheaven!

The hand blotted out everything else, but as Meng Hao looked up at it,

his eyes glittered. He considered taking out the wooden statue. He didn't want to, and in fact, the last time he had been in secluded meditation trying to absorb the Ninth Hex, and the will of Allheaven interfered, he had only relied on his own power to fight back.

As far as Meng Hao could tell, using the Ninth Hex before it was complete would result in irreversible losses, and would make it less effective in the future!

But now, it seemed he had no choice but to unleash it. However, in the very moment when he was about to do so, the Sect Leader threw his head back and let out an enraged roar.

"This is the Vast Expanse School, a branch of the Vast Expanse Society! This is the legacy of Patriarch Vast Expanse, and no will has the right to interfere with us!" His hands flashed in a double-handed incantation gesture, and he pointed up into the sky. Immediately, the ground off in the distance began to quake, and an ancient aura erupted out.

The instant it appeared, the hand up above trembled to a stop.

Then, a voice could be heard, murmuring and indistinct. And yet, Meng Hao was able to make out the word being spoken.

"Ghost...."

The hand suddenly surged back into motion, moving with even greater speed than before. At the same time, a crevice opened up in the ground, from within which brilliant red light spilled out. Then, a pillar of lava exploded up, at the top of which was, unexpectedly, a turtle shell!

The turtle shell radiated an ancient power which caused everything to shake violently. It was almost as if something profoundly old were underneath it, trying to escape. The turtle shell began to spin, giving rise to a tempest which spread out in all directions. As soon as the hand touched it, the tempest collapsed, and blood oozed out of the corners of the Sect Leader's mouth. His eyes were bright red; he was aware of the critical danger they were in, so he gritted his teeth and then roared, "Vast Expanse Precious Treasure, come forth!"

As soon as the words left his mouth, the spinning turtle shell stopped in place, and something stretched out from within it.... A skeletal hand!

It was completely gold, and appeared to be the hand of a cultivator!

An intense and pure Immortal qi emanated off of it, something which exceeded the imaginations of everyone. None of them had ever seen anything so pure and powerful, except for Meng Hao, who had made contact with a similar Immortal qi when he visited the column of the Immortal outside the Vast Expanse.

As soon as the skeletal hand appeared, the bronze lamp inside of Meng Hao began to flicker wildly.

Meng Hao immediately thought back to the first time he had visited Planet Vast Expanse, and what he had felt from the bronze lamp. Most others would not be able to discern whose hand that was, unless they were familiar with certain legends or stories. But Meng Hao was sure, based on his feelings, that this skeletal hand... actually belonged to...

Patriarch Vast Expanse!

He had been transformed from the Immortal into the Ghost, and was the first person in the starry sky of Allheaven to Transcend. He was also the first person to destroy one of Allheaven's fingers.

Clearly, although he had transformed into the Ghost, one of his hands ended up becoming that of the Immortal. He left it behind as a legacy, which became the guardian treasure of the Vast Expanse School.

As soon as the skeletal hand appeared, the descending will of Allheaven began to tremble, and let out an enraged roar. The skeletal hand flew up, growing larger and larger until it was enormous, and actually looked like a hand. Then, it slammed into the descending hand which was the will of Allheaven.

It was like two giants crossing time and space to slam into each other directly above the teleportation portal!

Rumbling sounds echoed out through Planet Vast Expanse, causing crevices to open up throughout the lands. The hand of the will of

Allheaven instantly shattered into pieces, and another furious roar echoed out into the world.

Everything trembled, and the half-planet seemed to be on the verge of collapsing. But then, golden light spread out from the skeletal hand, covering everything, protecting everything, ensuring that the will of Allheaven could do nothing against it!

In the moment that the hand formed by the will of Allheaven collapsed, the teleportation portal surged into action. Rumbling echoed out, and a brilliant light shot up into the air. Meng Hao and everyone else vanished.

As they did, cracking sounds emanated out from the teleportation portal. However, because of the golden light covering everything, it did not shatter. Much of it crumbled, but the main form stayed intact.

The will of Allheaven fell silent, and then slowly faded away. At the same time, the golden light gradually receded. The golden hand shrank back down, turning skeletal once again. Then it settled back down underneath the turtle shell, which sank back down into the ground with the lava.

The crevice in the ground slowly closed back up, and everything went back to normal....

When Meng Hao and the others reappeared, they were inside the necropolis.

Blood was oozing out of Meng Hao's mouth, and the others were in worse shape. Expressions of lingering fear could be seen on their faces. As they thought back to the danger they had been in, their hearts quivered.

If that descending hand had managed to land, not only would the teleportation portal have been destroyed, but the entire group would have been killed in body and mind.

Everyone began to look over at Meng Hao. All of them could tell that the sudden developments which had occurred had something to do with him.

That was especially true of the Sect Leader, who looked at Meng Hao with a deep and profound gaze.

After a moment of silence, Meng Hao clasped hands and bowed deeply to the others.

“What I have promised,” he said, “I will absolutely live up to.” In response, the Sect Leader’s expression softened a bit. Another moment passed, and the others nodded.

“Thank you for your trouble, Fellow Daoist Meng,” the Sect Leader said.

Meng Hao didn’t say anything more. He took a step forward and looked out at the ruins that filled the necropolis. Casting his senses out, he confirmed that this place was almost completely devoid of the will of Allheaven. Although there were faint traces, they were incredibly weak.

Furthermore, the deeper one got into the nine land masses that made up the necropolis, the more faint those traces became. In fact, the ninth land mass seemed to have no trace of the will of Allheaven at all.

“This is definitely the place for me to Transcend,” he thought. He opened his third eye, and the world changed. Far off on the ninth land mass, he could see the huge throne, and the figure sitting upon it. That figure’s eyes opened, and looked directly at Meng Hao.

Chapter 1528: The Necropolis Again

“Over the past several hundred years, we’ve come here on numerous occasions,” said the Sect Leader, his brow furrowed. “We know exactly how to avoid the catastrophe which strikes this place, and have the perfect place to weather the storm.

“However, we were never able to get past the eighth land mass. We always end up stuck at the threshold of the ninth.” After all of their visits, they had never been able to come up with a method to get into the ninth land mass.

Bai Wuchen stood a bit off to the side. “The entryway to the ninth land mass is a door,” she said. “Only by opening that door can you enter.”

Meng Hao nodded in response, then began to move forward. By this point, the countless ghosts which inhabited the outer region of the necropolis began to swarm excitedly toward Meng Hao as he flew along.

This was not the first time that the Sect Leader and the others had seen Meng Hao’s power within the necropolis, but they were still shaken. That was especially true of Immortal Bai Wuchen, who couldn’t help but think back to the time she had been defeated by Meng Hao all those hundreds of years ago.

Sighing inwardly, the group unleashed all of their power to follow Meng Hao as he flew along.

Whenever they had come here on their own, they had to act with extreme prudence and caution, even in the outer area.

But with Meng Hao leading them... it was exactly the opposite. With him, the monarch of the ghosts, nothing in the place could harm them at all.

Everywhere they passed, rumbling could be sensed as the surrounding ghosts clustered around Meng Hao, their eyes radiating ardor and worship.

It almost seemed as if Meng Hao could simply tell them to destroy themselves, and they wouldn’t hesitate to comply.

He looked around at the ghosts, his eyes shining with a strange light. Back when he first came here and experienced the strangeness of the ghosts, an idea had begun to form. At that time, though, even though he could control the ghosts, he felt that it was a bit unrealistic.

But now, with the Ninth Hex on the verge of being completed, he starting thinking about that same old idea. This time, he didn't think that it was unrealistic. In fact...

He was sure that he could do it!

He would take all of the ghosts in the necropolis with him as his subordinates. With them and the Ninth Sect, he would have a huge army that he could use to go back and destroy the 33 Heavens!

Of course, he wasn't underestimating the Immortal God Continent and the Devil Realm Continent either. Even if he Transcended, he still would never underestimate his enemies. He had some speculations about the true nature of those two enemies, but even still, he wanted to be completely prepared to face them.

He was also aware that if he successfully absorbed the Ninth Hex and Transcended, then once he left the necropolis, the will of Allheaven would go mad to an unprecedented degree.

His eyes flashed coldly as he proceeded along. The ghosts which surrounded them joined him as he headed toward the first land mass. When they reached the bridge, Meng Hao didn't hesitate at all. He flew across it without the slightest pause, surrounded by a sea of ghosts.

Behind him, the Sect Leader and the others saw how different things were from their previous trips over the past several hundred years, and they smiled wryly. In all of their past trips after the first one with Meng Hao, they had always been forced to tackle that bridge with extreme caution.

But now, Meng Hao simply barged across it. They couldn't help but be a bit envious.

"It's like this place is his home..." Jin Yunshan murmured as he followed

along.

Even as Meng Hao was flying across the bridge, and just when he was about to step onto the first land mass, a roar echoed out from down below the bridge. It appeared as if some dark and sinister being from down below was about to leap out and block their path.

Upon closer examination, they saw that it was a huge tiger, fully 300 meters long, and so black in color that it seemed to merge with the void around it. Last time Meng Hao had been here, and had fallen down into the abyss beneath the bridge, he hadn't seen anything like this tiger.

He looked down, and their gazes met. Then, the tiger shivered. Apparently, it wasn't frightened of the ghosts, but Meng Hao's gaze caused its heart to tremble. It shrank back, tail between its legs, and then vanished.

Meng Hao looked away and proceeded onward to step onto the first land mass. In the past, that tiger had been a big headache for the Sect Leader and the others, so to see it flee like that caused them to smile wryly yet again.

It was powerful, with incredible battle prowess, and the way it could merge with the void around it made all of its divine abilities and magical techniques even more effective. It was also particularly brutal in its attacks. When angered, it could unleash a storm of vengeful spirits that were incredibly fierce. Over the past hundreds of years, the Sect Leader and the others had been forced to expend a lot of effort to get past it across the bridge.

But now....

"This place really is like his home...." thought the Sect Leader, sighing inwardly. However, he was also filled with hope that this time, they really might be able to make it to the ninth land mass.

In fact, he had the feeling that if Meng Hao couldn't get to the ninth land mass, then no one could.

After stepping back onto the first land mass, Meng Hao took a deep

breath. This was his third time in the place, the first being on the initial foray into the necropolis, and the second being when he came for the copper mirror shard.

“This is my third time, and perhaps my last. When I leave, I will have Transcended!” A strange light appeared in Meng Hao’s eyes as he flickered into motion. He shot forward at top speed, throwing his head back and letting loose a long cry. As he sped across the first land mass, the ghosts there all trembled and began to fly over.

“It’s the Emperor....”

“The aura of the Emperor... for the third time!”

“The Emperor is summoning us....”

Countless ghosts appeared in all directions. The sky trembled, and the lands shook as they swirled around Meng Hao.

The Sect Leader and the others had seen similar things happen before, and were prepared, but still couldn’t help but be shaken and also slightly envious.

As more and more ghosts gathered around him, he picked up speed. Anyone who could see the ghosts would have seen a vast, seemingly endless sea around him.

Compared to that vast sea, the cultivators were tiny and insignificant. As for Meng Hao, he actually didn’t need to fly on his own power, he simply stood there as the scintillating sea carried him along.

Everything trembled as the sea of ghosts completely disregarded the passageway between the first land mass and the second. It couldn’t be stopped at all, and a moment later, Meng Hao was on the second land mass.

The ghosts there were equally shaken, and began to swarm toward him, joining the enormous sea.

The sky darkened, and everything in the world shook violently. Meng Hao waved his sleeve, and the ghosts shot toward the third land mass with

indescribable speed.

The Sect Leader and the others gasped. Although they couldn't see the ghosts, they could sense the incredible coldness, and were already all starting to wonder the same thing.

"If things keep going on like this... then how many ghosts will he have accumulated by the time we reach the eighth land mass?" The entire group exchanged shocked glances.

Rumbling sounds could be heard in all Heaven and Earth as the boundless sea of ghosts swept Meng Hao on toward the fourth land mass.

The entrance to the fourth land mass was a huge abyss filled with countless vicious eyes that seemed intent on devouring all life forms that entered.

In addition to the eyes were hulking figures in crude clothing whose bodies were covered in rotting flesh. They looked like giants who had been stitched together with the skins of numerous corpses.

As Meng Hao neared with the sea of ghosts, the giants roared and flew out. The eyes began to shine with red light as they too shot out of the abyss to block the path.

But then they saw Meng Hao and the sea of ghosts. The giants gaped in shock, and the vicious expressions on their faces disappeared, to be replaced by fear. Screaming, they retreated into the abyss at top speed.

As for the eyes, they seemed even more shaken and terrified, and immediately fell back.

In the blink of an eye, the sea of ghosts was sailing over the abyss onto the fourth land mass.

Meng Hao didn't even look at the abyss. As for the Sect Leader and the others, they smiled wryly as they thought about how much effort it had taken them to get past this obstacle in the past. The same figures which had been so terrifying in the past had fled in fear this time.

Chapter 1529: Flying Over the Land Masses!

The fourth land mass was covered in ruins, and looked even more wild and abandoned than the first three land masses. In fact, Meng Hao even spotted corpses!

They were withered after all the years which had passed, and none of them were whole. They were so broken apart that it was impossible to tell which were male or female, or to determine the level of their cultivation base when they were alive. But they were a shocking sight nonetheless. As Meng Hao flew through the air over all of them, he couldn't help but recall the scene in which the finger of Allheaven destroyed this world.

"The previous three land masses contain nothing but ruins," explained the Sect Leader, mixed emotions flickering in his eyes. "There are no corpses there. The corpses show up starting in the fourth land mass. What you see here counts for almost nothing. The further in we go, the more corpses we will see. By the time we reach the eighth land mass, we will see them... everywhere, some of them even completely intact." Considering their previous visits to this place, plus further information gleaned from the ancient records, the Sect Leader had a much deeper understanding of the necropolis now.

"You'll even see some magical items, some of which are excellently preserved. However, you mustn't allow yourself to get greedy, Fellow Daoist Meng. You can't touch any of the things you see..."

At this point, Jin Yunshan broke in: "The first time we saw such treasures, there was one individual who greedily attempted to lay hands on them. That gave rise to a powerful backlash, and a terrifying force of expulsion from the entire necropolis itself. The offending person was transformed into a pool of blood in front of our very eyes." Although the fear in his eyes was clear, it was also obvious that he felt it was a pity that they couldn't take any of the treasures away with them.

Meng Hao nodded. He sent his divine sense out, and could feel all of the

countless ghosts in the fourth land mass. This was his first time here, and almost as soon as his divine sense began to spread out, the corpses littering the ground began to tremble, and then ghosts flew out from inside of them, as well as from within the various ruins that dotted the landscape. Soon, the entire fourth land mass was teeming with activity.

The scene playing out in front of them caused the Sect Leader and the others too look on with wide eyes. Although this wasn't anything unexpected, the intense coldness they were experiencing increased by several fold.

Rumbling sounds filled Heaven and Earth as countless ghosts sensed Meng Hao's presence on the fourth land mass, and woke up, eyes shining with madness.

"The aura of the Emperor...."

"It's the Emperor...."

All of the ghosts on the fourth land mass took to the air and sped toward Meng Hao. As the intense, shocking coldness spread out, Meng Hao's eyes shone, and he flicked his sleeve. Without pausing for a moment, he flew into motion.

As he proceeded along, more ghosts from the fourth land mass streamed toward him. As soon as they caught sight of him from a distance, they would bow in worship. The sea of ghosts around him continued to grow larger and larger as he swept across the land mass. Eventually, he reached a cliff face that led to the fifth land mass.

A huge statue was visible there, fully 30,000 meters tall. It was a stunning sight, like an enormous mountain that blocked the way into the fifth land mass.

"There is no fighting against this mountain," the Sect Leader said. "We spent a lot of time trying to figure out how to get into the fifth land mass. Eventually, we found that you have to wait approximately half a year.

"Around that time, the mountain will gradually shrink until it's only 300 meters tall. Then, at its smallest state, it can be passed with relative safety.

“If you try to barge past the mountain now, it will become enraged. Even considering the level of our cultivation bases, it can still pose a danger to us. After all, this statue was built back when these lands were alive and thriving, making it boundlessly powerful.... Fellow Daoist Meng, I suggest we just wait here for a bit.” Even though the Sect Leader had seen this mountain before, every time he looked at its majestic height, he was left shaken.

“Half a year?” Meng Hao said. “I can’t wait that long,” Before the Sect Leader could say anything else, Meng Hao’s eyes flashed, and he pointed at the huge mountain.

“Move this mountain for me!” he said coolly, bolstering his words with divine sense. The ghosts in the vast sea around him immediately began to howl and surge with energy. The aura which began to spread out left the Sect Leader and the others with tingling scalps.

Vast quantities of ghosts surged forward toward the enormous mountain. Rumbling echoed out as it began to shake, and even rock back and forth.

The Sect Leader and the others gasped as they noticed that as the mountain shook back and forth, it unexpectedly... began to rise slowly into the air.

The lands quaked as the mountain was ripped away from them.

Meng Hao could see the ghosts themselves, surrounding the mountain. Howling, they unleashed shocking power to do exactly as Meng Hao had asked, to move the mountain!

Rumbling sounds filled the air as the enormous mountain continued to rise. Soon, to the shock of the Sect Leader and the others, it had been lifted up thirty meters above the surface of the ground!

At the same time, a howl echoed out from the peak of the mountain. Countless rocks and rubble tumbled down as the mountain opened its enormous eyes. A nose appeared, and then a mouth. Shockingly, the entire face became visible.

It was an ancient face whose eyes radiated fury.

“Who... disturbs my slumb- huh?” The voice contained incredible pressure and dignity, and even the power of natural law, as if it could alter Heaven and Earth. Before it could finish speaking, though, it suddenly fell silent.

The face stared at the countless ghosts, and the boundless hostility they radiated, which was like an explosive will that shouted a single sentence!

“Shut up!”

Lands, mountains, sky, everything was trembling.

“Dammit, where did all these ghosts come from!?” the face blurted. Then its mouth snapped shut.

It looked at Meng Hao, its expression flickering with fear. After a moment, it closed its eyes and sank back down into the surface of the mountain, doing nothing to prevent the ghosts from moving the mountain.

The Sect Leader’s eyes were wide. The other 9-Essences Paragons who stood around him exchanged shocked glances. When they had come here by themselves, everything along the way required extreme caution and hard work. However, Meng Hao could disregard everything in his path. At the most... he simply had to speak a few words to resolve any situation he faced.

Jin Yunshan’s face twitched, and then he looked contemptuously over at the mountain. He couldn’t forget what had occurred the first time they had reached this point and tried to force their way past the mountain. To their shock, it had contained power like Heavenly might.

Jin Yunshan’s contempt grew as... the mountain, apparently fearful for its safety, shrank down, making it easier for the ghosts to move it. Jin Yunshan was left completely speechless.

Sha Jiudong took a deep breath, and Bai Wuchen completely abandoned any sort of unyielding attitude from years past.

Soon, the mountain was completely moved out of the way and then placed down off to the side. The ghosts swept about, completely clearing the path to the fifth land mass.

Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever as he flew forward. A moment later, he was on the fifth land mass. After taking a deep breath, he continued onward.

From the time they had entered the necropolis until this moment, not even ten days had passed.

They sped along through the fifth land mass for a few more days. This place was even bleaker than the other land masses. Meng Hao eyed the corpses down below as he flew along toward the end of the fifth land mass, where a huge wave of water existed, completely separating the two land masses.

This time, the Sect Leader didn't say anything. Considering that Meng Hao had his ghosts, he decided that the best thing for him to do was simply followed Meng Hao's lead.

He was right. Meng Hao waved his sleeve, and the sea of ghosts shot forward. Now that the ghosts from the fifth land mass had joined in, the sea was even more majestic than before. It slammed into the huge wave, which was powerless to resist. It shattered, and Meng Hao led the ghosts flying over into the next land mass.

Within ten days, they had passed from the sixth land mass into the seventh, and after that, the eighth!

Meng Hao's sea of ghosts continued to grow larger. By the time they reached the eighth land mass, it was like a massive vortex swirling around him. It was so powerful that the Sect Leader and the others could only look on with wide eyes.

There were so many ghosts swirling around in the vortex, that they formed together... into something that looked like an enormous, illusory ghost head, which everyone could see!

If that were all there were to it, it might not be a big deal. However, even

more shocking was that the countless corpses on the eighth land mass rose to their feet, and their previously empty eyes seemed to burn with flame.

All of them sped onward toward the border of the eighth land mass.

Chapter 1530: The Ninth Land Mass!

The barrier between the eighth and ninth land masses was an enormous door, surrounded by a wall that seemed to stretch off into infinity.

The Sect Leader and the others had never made it past this point. They had tried skirting the door by going to the left or right, but not even by traveling to the very border of the eighth land mass were they able to find a point where they could get through.

The only way to proceed was to do so through this door. That was the only way to get to the ninth land mass.

No matter what ideas they came up with to push open the door, no matter how much power they drew upon, it did no good.

The Sect Leader was now looking up at it, explaining everything he knew about it to Meng Hao, including all of the ways they had failed to open it.

Meng Hao stood there, surrounded by a boundless sea of ghosts, who maintained complete silence, waiting there with bowed heads as he thought about the situation. A single word from him, and they would spring into action and become the fiercest of spirits, completely oblivious to their own safety.

Seeing Meng Hao lost in thought, Jin Yunshan and the others didn't dare to disturb him. They had learned hundreds of years ago that in the necropolis, Meng Hao was both the monarch and the Emperor.

After a moment, Meng Hao burst into action. In the blink of an eye, he was directly in front of the door. In terms of size, he was like nothing compared to it, and yet, the power radiating out of him caused everything shake, and sent the entire surroundings into chaos.

He took a deep breath as he reached out and pushed on the door.

Heaven-shaking, Earth-shattering power erupted out. It quickly reached the peak of the 9-Essences level, which exceeded the power of the Second Paragon and the others like him.

However, it didn't stop there. It continued to rise with explosive force,

surpassing Jin Yunshan, Sha Jiudong, and Bai Wuchen, and causing their eyes to widen.

Although they were completely aware of how terrifying Meng Hao was, it was only now that they could sense the true astonishing level of his cultivation base.

Things weren't over yet. Increasingly boundless cultivation base power exploded out. As Meng Hao's power continued to climb, he eventually exceeded even the level of the Sect Leader. It reached the point where he was above any and all 9-Essences cultivators. And yet, the door didn't so much as budge.

Meng Hao frowned at the lack of reaction. Throwing all of the power he could manage at it was as good as throwing a stone ox into the ocean. Eyes flashing, he waved his right hand, and the copper mirror appeared. Black threads spread out, covering his entire body in the form of a suit of armor.

With the black armor, his energy rose even higher, and a tempest sprang up around him. The Sect Leader and the other 9-Essences experts all gasped and began to back away.

They didn't come to a stop until they were several hundred meters away, where they looked at Meng Hao with fear and shock.

Meng Hao was so terrifyingly powerful that they weren't sure they could fight him even if they all joined forces.

With the suit of armor, his cultivation base was at its very pinnacle. He reached out and once again shoved against the door. As far as the Sect Leader could remember, they had never seen the door move at all during the past several hundred years. However, as of this moment, it shuddered.

Although it only lasted for a moment, it left the Sect Leader's mind spinning, and he began to pant in anticipation. It wasn't that he lacked willpower. Rather, after stepping into the 9-Essences level, all of his dreams had become wrapped up with the hope that lay in this necropolis.

Blue veins bulged on Meng Hao's face as he unleashed incredible power through his hand. The result was that the door vibrated slightly, and yet,

didn't move.

A vicious expression appeared in Meng Hao's eyes as he raised his left hand to also push against the door.

Energy blasted out in all directions, and a booming sound like that of a bell echoed out through the eighth land mass, then to the seventh, the sixth... and all the way to the first land mass.

The door vibrated again, and a cloud of dust rose up, but the door still didn't open. Meng Hao frowned.

He was at the peak level of power, and yet even then, couldn't open the door. That seemed to indicate that only someone who had Transcended could open it.

"But someone who had Transcended wouldn't need the altar on the ninth land mass. Therefore, the method to open the door can't relate to Transcendence. There must be some other way." After some thought, Meng Hao sent his divine sense out to fill the eighth land mass. It took some time, but he managed to lock down on some of the scant will of Allheaven that existed in the area.

Although it was only a scrap, it was enough that it could cause problems if he tried to absorb the Ninth Hex.

"Starting from the first land mass, the will of Allheaven grows weaker and weaker. Here on the eighth, there's only a tiny bit. Therefore, the ninth... is likely to have none of the will of Allheaven at all!

"That is the only place suitable to absorb the Ninth Hex, all the while avoiding interference from Allheaven, and potentially Transcend!" Meng Hao's eyes shone with determination, and he took a deep breath. Then, he backed up a few paces and reached out to the ghosts with his will!

"Break open this door!"

The instant Meng Hao's will transmitted those orders, the masses of ghosts raised their heads. Eyes glowing, they surged into motion, howling and roaring as they battered against the huge door!

BOOOOOOOOOOMMM!

Waves of ghosts smashed into it, causing it to shake. Some of the ghosts who were especially gigantic and fierce slammed head-first into the door.

Rumbling echoed out, causing all Heaven and Earth to shake violently in the necropolis as the ghosts battered the door.

It was a shocking scene. Endless streams of ghosts unleashed incredible power, causing the door to rumble and vibrate even more intensely than when Meng Hao had pushed against it.

The combined power of the ghosts of all eight of the land masses was something that even Meng Hao with his battle prowess would be fearful of. Now, it was causing the door to tremble, making it seem like opening it wasn't an impossibility after all.

The Sect Leader and the others were completely shaken. Beyond this door was the hope they sought. It had blocked their way for hundreds of years, but now seemed like the most likely moment in which it could be opened!

Jin Yunshan was the first to take action. Roaring, he unleashed his cultivation base and his Essence power, reaching out with both hands to push against the door.

The Sect Leader followed a moment later, unleashing divine abilities and Essence power to create a huge hand that shoved against the door.

Next was Sha Jiudong, who transformed into a sandstorm that swept out with incredible power. Then was Immortal Bai Wuchen, who summoned powerful mists. All of the other 9-Essences Paragons unleashed their cultivation base power. They kept nothing hidden, utilizing everything at their disposal to slam against the door.

Under their combined assault, the door leading to the ninth land mass, which had blocked their path for so long, began to rumble loudly, and shake visibly. It seemed as if the door might open at any moment.

Meng Hao's eyes were bright red as he transformed into a huge roc which, in the blink of an eye, shot forward to slam into the door.

Mountains shook and the lands quaked. The door trembled, as if it might open by a sliver.

However, that tiny sliver was like the difference between Heaven and Earth. Despite the combined assault of the entire group of cultivators, plus the endless army of ghosts, the door still didn't open. The Sect Leader and the others were beginning to despair.

"We can't open the door in this way...?"

"How do we do it? Could it really be true that only a Transcendent cultivator can open it?!"

"Impossible. Why would a Transcendent cultivator ever try to get to the ninth altar!?" In their despair, everyone was pushing as hard as they could, even coughing up blood.

The ghosts emitted soundless screams. Everyone was pushing out with all the power they could muster. Meng Hao began to pant. Finally, he sent out his will via divine sense, filling the entire eighth land mass.

It was like a bolt of lightning that landed upon the various corpses on the land mass, within whose eyes burned white, burning light. They began to run, faster and faster, until soon they became visible off in the distance.

More and more corpses appeared, running toward the door itself, which they then began to push against. They seemed endless, and as they pushed against the door, at long last, it opened up by a sliver.

That completely enlivened the Sect Leader and the others. Meng Hao's eyes gleamed with anticipation, and he pushed forward even harder. Finally, the door opened!

Meng Hao in azure roc-form shot forward through the opening, followed closely by the Sect Leader and the others. It was with complete and utter excitement that they flew through the air at top speed.

Finally, they were able to enter... the ninth land mass!

This was the final land mass in the necropolis, and also the location of that huge throne.

Chapter 1531: Charge!

Meng Hao floated above the ninth land mass, backed by the Sect Leader and the others, as well as the vast sea of ghosts.

“The ninth land mass!” The Sect Leader threw his head back and laughed uproariously. The excitement on his face was clear. He and the others had been waiting a long time for this day. This was where lay their hope to Transcend.

The Sect Leader wasn’t the only one with such feelings. Jin Yunshan, Sha Jiudong, Bai Wuchen, and all of the other 9-Essences Paragons were equally excited.

The Sect Leader took a deep breath, then turned to Meng Hao, clasped hands and bowed deeply.

“Fellow Daoist Meng, this is a kindness I will never, ever forget. If you the day comes in which you need my assistance in some matter, simply say the word!”

After the Sect Leader, Jin Yunshan, Sha Jiudong and Bai Wuchen all clasped hands and bowed as well.

“I will never forget this kindness for the rest of my life!”

“Thank you, Ninth Paragon!”

Their attitudes were sincere. All of the ill feelings from the past had long since dissipated, and their thankfulness toward Meng Hao was deep and genuine.

Compared to the chance to stride toward Transcendence, past grudges were completely insignificant. All cultivators sought to reach Transcendence in the end. These three all stood at the peak of 9-Essences, and therefore, the hope to Transcend was the greatest yearning that existed within their hearts.

They had no way to know if they would succeed or not, but as long as there was even a bit of hope, they would try.

Meng Hao could see their excitement and sincerity. Their hearts lacked any desire to fight, and contained no schemes or plots. Now that they had reached the ninth land mass, the hope of Transcendence left them excited and profoundly thankful.

Smiling, he clasped hands and bowed deeply in return.

“We have all come here for Transcendence,” he said. “Whether or not we succeed will depend on the will of Heaven, on our own good fortune, and on our own preparations. I sincerely hope that all of you succeed in Transcending, Fellow Daoists, and I hope that you all may walk a great Dao!”

Jin Yunshan took a deep breath, flicked his sleeve, and then spoke in a voice that echoed like thunder. “Forget the will of Heaven and good fortune! Our success will be determined by our own preparations! Fellow Daoist Meng, if I Transcend, then I will personally help you take care of your grudge with the Immortal God Continent and the Devil Realm Continent! In fact, even if I don’t Transcend, I’ll still help!”

The Sect Leader laughed heartily, then echoed Jin Yunshan’s words.

“Count me in too!”

“Fellow Daoist Meng,” said Sha Jiudong, “considering we’ve been friends for hundreds of years, then... I will help too!”

“The moment we stepped onto this land mass, our conflicts from the past vanished like smoke,” said Bai Wuchen, her voice soft. “Fellow Daoist Meng, I would like to help you, sir. Thank you for giving me a chance to return home.”

All of the other 9-Essences Paragons laughed and made similar statements and promises.

Meng Hao was moved. After a moment of silence, he once again clasped hands and bowed deeply to them.

“Fellow Daoist Meng,” said the Sect Leader, “let us all head to the Transcendence Dais together!” Laughing, he flew up into the air, followed by the rest of the Paragons.

However, Meng Hao shook his head.

“Why don’t you go on ahead of me, Fellow Daoists. Before visiting the Transcendence Dais, I need to go pay my respects to a certain individual.” Meng Hao did nothing to conceal his true aim, and after he spoke, the others looked back thoughtfully for a moment. Although Meng Hao had never fully explained how he could control the sea of ghosts, they had long since come to certain conclusions of their own. Therefore, they all understood completely.

They did nothing to convince him otherwise. After saying their goodbyes, the group shot off toward the center of the ninth land mass... and the ninth Transcendence Dais.

Meng Hao watched them leave, then took a deep breath. His path to Transcendence was different than theirs. Although Allheaven would surely attempt to stop them also, the lengths he would go to regarding Meng Hao’s Transcendence would be like the difference between a puddle and an ocean.

Therefore, Meng Hao needed to be very careful. Although he couldn’t sense any of the will of Allheaven on this ninth land mass, he wanted to be prepared for all possibilities. As such, he decided that the best thing would be to go pay respects to the person who had, with a single word, prevented the will of Allheaven from interfering with him on the first land mass.

“Patriarch Vast Expanse....” he murmured. With that, he burst into motion, heading toward the far end of the ninth land mass, where the huge throne was located.

With every day that passed, the throne grew clearer and larger, and within Meng Hao’s heart, the waves of excitement which battered him also grew larger. At a certain point, the sea of ghosts hadn’t dared to proceed any further, and were now waiting some distance behind him, prostrated toward the person on the throne.

Clearly, that person far exceeded Meng Hao, as... the true Emperor of this place.

The bronze lamp inside of Meng Hao was shining with unprecedented brightness, making him look almost as if he were made from light.

As he got closer to the throne, it became clear that it had been crafted from enormous slabs of green marble. It almost looked like a mountain, rising from the very end of the ninth land mass. As for the figure seated upon it, he looked like a giant statue.

Although he wasn't a flesh-and-blood person, he was incredibly lifelike. Even from a distance, it was possible to see the expression on his face. It was one of grief and loss.

Deep within his eyes was a gleam of reminiscence. It was as if he were looking out at all the lands of the necropolis, and thinking the only thing he had left: his memories of the past.

He seemed lonely, a feeling which somehow seeped into Meng Hao as he neared.

He stopped about 3,000 meters in front of the statue, where he looked up at it, studying it for a while before finally clasping hands and bowing deeply.

The copper mirror flew out of its own volition, and the parrot appeared within it. It was uncharacteristically quiet as it looked at the statue. It appeared to be thinking about past times as it flew over and circled around the statue a few times. The grief in its eyes was clear.

Meng Hao looked on. The bronze lamp inside of him was shining more brightly than ever, making Meng Hao look like a dazzling sun. Suddenly, the statue's gaze seemed to shift. Instead of looking off into the distance, it was as if he were now looking at Meng Hao, the grief in his eyes replaced by kindness.

Perhaps that was just Meng Hao's imagination. Regardless, he once again bowed, then began to speak in a soft voice.

"Junior offers greetings, Patriarch Vast Expanse!"

"I will never forget the kindness shown by your bronze lamp, which saved my life."

“Thank you also for the copper mirror, which has accompanied me for all my days.

“I’ve come here to attempt to break through to Transcendence. Patriarch, I would like to request that you act as Dharma Protector....”

After a long moment, he looked back up at the statue. After gazing deeply at it for a moment, his eyes filled with determination. As of that moment, there wasn’t the slightest bit of hesitation within his heart. He would not go to the Transcendence Dais.

That altar might be useful to the Sect Leader and the others, but Meng Hao had long since picked a different way to go about things. He didn’t need the Transcendence Dais, he needed this ninth land mass, a place where Allheaven couldn’t interfere, or at least, would have a very difficult time doing so.

Meng Hao took a deep breath and sat down cross-legged. Unexpectedly, he had chosen this very spot, in front of the statue and the throne, to attempt to reach that most paramount of Realms, Transcendence!

Transcendence was also known as the Daosource. It was something that countless powerful experts yearned for in their dreams. However, the number of people who had succeeded was minute. From ancient times until present, only three people had ever truly succeeded within the starry sky of Allheaven.

Meng Hao’s eyes glittered as he sat there quietly, his legs crossed. After a moment, he extended his right hand, and a wooden sculpture appeared, which was none other than the Ninth Hex!

He held the statue out in front of him and opened his Dao eye, sending out powerful divine sense. The divine sense wrapped around the statue, which floated up into the air in front of Meng Hao and then began to dissolve!

Meng Hao poured all of himself into the wooden statue, cutting off all connections to the outside world. He sealed off his senses as he focused utterly and thoroughly on the statue.

Gradually, a shocking aura began to rise up. The ninth land mass began to tremble, and at the same time, the starry sky of Allheaven outside of the necropolis filled with ripples as an enraged roar echoed out.

The ripples then began to converge in the void just outside the necropolis. If anyone were standing outside to observe, they would be able to see the outline of a huge person standing there.

All of the lands were shaking as a will stretched out that could shake the world.

In that same moment, the Sect Leader and the others were seated cross-legged on the ninth land mass' altar, attempting to break through and Transcend.

In all their past forays into the necropolis, they had come to the realization that seeking enlightenment alone was far inferior to acting together.

Therefore, the best thing to do now was join forces to seek enlightenment. Their minds were linked, making them more powerful, and increasing their gains as they sought enlightenment. The result was far superior to acting alone.

In the same moment that Meng Hao began to work on the Ninth Hex, the Sect Leader and the others converged their power and divine sense, causing an invisible column of qi to rise up into the air.

Chapter 1532: All Ye Living Beings Art My Sons

It was actually a blessing for them to be able to make their attempt at Transcendence along with Meng Hao. Normally, the first difficult step would be to deal with the will of Allheaven. However, that will was now completely ignoring the Sect Leader and the others, and was targeting... Meng Hao, and Meng Hao alone!

It could not simply allow Meng Hao to Transcend!

Rumbling echoed out as the will of the starry sky of Allheaven converged outside of the necropolis, and then prepared to enter it!

The will of Allheaven would easily be able to enter any other location. But the necropolis was not like any other location; it was a very difficult place to enter. It could expel other Transcendent cultivators, and could unleash that same force upon the will of Allheaven.

There was a boundless hatred within the necropolis, and the will of Allheaven was the source and object of that hatred.

Under any other circumstances, the will of Allheaven would never choose to try to enter the necropolis. However, as of this moment, it was holding nothing back in its effort to do so. The entire necropolis was shaking, and cracking sounds emanated out in all directions.

And yet, most of the will of Allheaven was still prevented from entering. Despite its relentless bombardment, only a small portion actually manifested inside.

That power instantly became a flood that surged across the first eight land masses, transforming into an enormous hand that bore down on the ninth.

However, the huge door that Meng Hao had recently moved was now back in place, and it prevented the hand from entering the ninth land mass. The hand slammed into the door, and a deafening boom rang out. The door was shaken, but refused to open, leaving the will of Allheaven

trapped outside.

Meng Hao was completely focused on melting the wooden statue. By now, about half of it was gone, having transformed into tiny drops of black fluid, each of which contained sealing marks.

Eventually, when the entire statue was dissolved, and the black drops of fluid were absorbed into Meng Hao, he would be able to combine them into a sealing mark within his soul. And that would be... the Ninth Hex!

Currently, he was still working on the first step of that process.

By now, rumbling sounds had filled the necropolis as the will of Allheaven repeatedly failed to batter its way inside. Finally, a roar of rage echoed out through the starry sky of Allheaven, causing asteroids in numerous locations to begin to tremble and shake. Then, they were instantly teleported away.

Billions upon billions of asteroids then began to crash into each other, merge together and then shrink down. Within the space of a few breaths of time, all of the asteroids which dotted the starry sky of Allheaven vanished from their original positions and began to merge together. Under the control of the will of Allheaven, they began to form nine enormous spikes!

Each of the nine spikes was fully 3,000,000 meters long, and completely astonishing in appearance as they hovered within the void outside the necropolis. Then the will of Allheaven split apart and fused into the nine spikes.

A moment later, intense energy erupted off of the spikes, and rumbling sounds could be heard as they shot toward the necropolis.

The necropolis shuddered, incapable of resisting. Cracking sounds echoed out as the first spike pierced through the necropolis' defenses, destroying the sky as it shot toward the first land mass, a blur of light.

As it descended, the expulsion power targeting the will of Allheaven grew even stronger. The spike fought back fiercely, causing flames to burst out all over it. Soon, it began to crumble and shrink down, until it was only

300,000 meters long, and no longer sharp. In the end, it was simply a gigantic asteroid hurtling down toward the first land mass.

When it made contact with the ground, everything shook, and massive crevices spread out.

Next came the second spike, the third, and the fourth, which pierced through the defenses to descend toward the second, third, and fourth land masses respectively.

They also burst into flames, shrinking down rapidly as they sailed past the first land mass. Of course, the deeper they got into the necropolis, the stronger the resistance they faced.

Rumbling sounds echoed out as the three asteroids closed in on their targets. The asteroid that landed on the second land mass was only 150,000 meters wide. The one that landed on the third land mass was only 60,000 meters wide. And as for the fourth, it was only 30,000 meters wide.

What a significant loss in power!

However, things weren't over. The fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth and ninth spikes tore through the sky, destroying the necropolis' defenses as they hurdled toward the fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, and ninth land masses.

The sky of the necropolis was completely obliterated, and yet the will of Allheaven still had incredible difficulty entering the necropolis. The lands quaked as the spikes burned, getting smaller and smaller the further they got into the necropolis.

The asteroid that landed on the fifth land mass was less than 30,000 meters wide. The sixth asteroid was 15,000 meters wide. By the time the eighth asteroid hit, it was only 3,000 meters wide.

And then there was the ninth spike. By the time it reached the ninth land mass, the flames had reduced it to nothing more than ash, and it couldn't enter.

Moments ago....

The sculpture in front of Meng Hao was about seventy percent dissolved, and he was surrounded by scintillating drops of black fluid.

Only a short bit of time remained before it would be completely dissolved.

Meng Hao was trembling. He couldn't sense what was happening on the outside, but could well guess that the will of Allheaven was going to any and all lengths to try to stop him. Therefore, he focused all of his divine sense on dissolving the statue.

"Faster. Must go faster!" Blue veins popped out on his face as he fought to take advantage of every second of time available to him.

It was at this point that he heard a massive boom coming from the first land mass. As the first asteroid smashed into the ground, a figure appeared from within the rubble.

He was humanoid, but had no facial features. He was almost just an outline. He looked up at the ninth land mass, then took a single step forward, causing him to blur into motion.

Only moments later, the second and third asteroids exploded, and even as the ash drifted out, figures appeared from within them as well.

The same thing happened on the fifth through eighth land masses.

All of the figures which appeared began to walk toward the ninth land mass, although the one which had come from within the first 300,000 meter asteroid was the fastest.

His first step took him onto the second land mass, where he merged together with the figure which had stepped out of the second asteroid. As soon as that happened, he changed, becoming less blurry and indistinguishable. Then, he took a second step.

The second step placed him on the third land mass, where he merged with the third figure. Now his facial features could be seen, and he looked like a young man.

He didn't stop there; each step he took brought him to another of the

land masses. On the fourth, fifth, and all the way to the eighth land mass, he absorbed the other figures, until he was standing there on the eighth land mass, looking up at the enormous door. By that point, everything about him was clearly visible.

He was a young man with long black hair, dressed in a long blue robe. He was exceedingly handsome, with an expression that was calm, yet simultaneously cold and indifferent.

Unexpectedly, a closer look revealed... that he looked exactly like the statue of the man seated on the throne on the ninth land mass!

“All ye living beings in the Vast Expanse art my children. This place is the necropolis of the Ghost, thence, I take his appearance.” This young man who could take the form of anything which existed in the starry sky of Allheaven extended his right hand and pushed onto the door, whereupon it swung open.

Then he took another step, and was on the ninth land mass. Almost instantly, a shocking force of expulsion hit him, pushing him back slightly.

His expression was the same as ever as he began to walk forward, despite the power of expulsion. Although it was a monumental effort, none of that showed on his face.

Another step, and he appeared by the Transcendence Dais. He looked over at the Sect Leader and the others, and then waved his right hand.

A boom echoed out, and the Transcendence Dais shook. The Sect Leader and the others all coughed up mouthfuls of blood, and their efforts at Transcendence were broken. There were even some of the weaker 9-Essences Paragons who let out blood curdling screams as they exploded, killed in body and soul.

Everyone else was astonished. Even as they looked over at the young man, he took another step, taking him to the position of the enormous statue. There, the boundless sea of ghosts all turned and looked at him, their expressions blank. However, that blankness only lasted for a moment before it was replaced by madness and hatred.

It didn't matter that the will of Allheaven had taken the form of Patriarch Vast Expanse. That couldn't change the aura which emanated off of him, and these ghosts hated that aura with a vengeance that would last for all eternity!

They surged into motion with a howl of fury. The enmity which came from their deaths, and which had transformed them into angry ghosts, would never dissipate. Now, they leapt into action, charging toward the young man that was the embodiment of the will of Allheaven.

"Oh ye my children," the young man said coolly, "dead are ye, and yet ye persist in wickedness. Thence, I strip ye of your bodies of reincarnation, and strip ye of your power of movement." His face was completely and utterly expressionless, and he didn't even seem to look at the ghosts. He took another step forward, completely focused on the person sitting there cross-legged, dissolving the wooden statue.

Chapter 1533: Dissolving the Hex!

This was not the first time that the will of the starry sky had made a move on Meng Hao. However, this was its first time taking such a form in his presence.

However, Meng Hao currently couldn't see that. All of his senses were sealed, as he focused completely on the task at hand. He had to dissolve the wooden statue as soon as possible.

By this point, the statue was almost eighty percent dissolved. Soon, that number would reach ninety percent.

"Only ten percent to go. Must go faster!" Meng Hao's divine sense was exploding out to a level that made it almost impossible to sustain as he tried to dissolve the statue even faster.

It was in that exact same moment that the embodiment of the will of Allheaven pierced through the boundless sea of ghosts. Strangely, when the ghosts tried to approach the will of Allheaven, they suddenly came to a halt, as if they had lost the ability to move.

In the blink of an eye, all of the ghosts began to tremble, and then cease all movement. Their eyes went wide, as though it wasn't just their bodies, but also their spirits, and their simplistic ghostly minds, were suddenly stripped of the power of movement!

The embodiment of the will of Allheaven took another step, putting him directly in front of Meng Hao. He looked down, and his expression flickered, as though he were befuddled, or confused.

"Why are you unwilling to merge with me?" he asked coolly. Then he reached out to tap on Meng Hao's forehead.

However, it was in that moment that a piercing cry suddenly rang out. The parrot appeared, flashing through the air to pierce directly through the chest of the embodiment of Allheaven.

The embodiment paused for a moment, and then prepared to continue moving his finger toward Meng Hao. But then a voice rang out, speaking a

single word that caused everything to tremble violently.

“BEGONE!”

The words came out of the mouth of the huge statue. They filled the world, creating a powerful tempest which shook the entire necropolis.

The embodiment of the will of Allheaven began to tremble, then staggered backward as if he couldn't control his own body. When he was about thirty meters away from Meng Hao, his flesh exploded, sending blood and gore splattering out in all directions. The skin and muscle of his body was more or less almost completely destroyed, revealing the bones underneath. Only half of his head remained intact.

As the voice which had just spoken faded away, the embodiment of the will of Allheaven slowly looked up. His wounds rapidly healed, and in the blink of an eye, he was back to normal.

In that same moment, there was a world out in the starry sky of the Vast Expanse, in which all of the life forms suddenly withered up. Their blood and life force vanished, and the entire world instantly became as still as death.

It was that very power of blood and life force which allowed the embodiment of the will of Allheaven to recover. As he looked up at the statue, his expression flickered again. He seemed confused, even dazed.

“So, it's you, my eldest son,” he said coolly.

An incisive gleam appeared within the eyes of the figure on the throne. Massive rumbling sounds echoed out as the statue slowly rose to its feet amidst a cascade of falling rocks and rubble. The falling stones and rubble soon formed a small mountain, from within which emerged a young man.

He looked exactly like the embodiment of the will of Allheaven, without a single difference.

However, his body clearly wasn't made of flesh and blood. This wasn't the true Patriarch Vast Expanse, but rather a clone, which he had left behind inside the necropolis to reminisce and guard the place.

When he emerged, the sky shook and the lands quaked, and the entire ninth land mass seemed to be on the verge of collapsing. Patriarch Vast Expanse's clone took a step forward, placing him directly in front of Meng Hao, separating him from the embodiment of the will of Allheaven.

He didn't speak, nor did his expression change in any way. He waved his right sleeve out in front of him, and an aura exploded out that seemed like both Immortal and Ghost, and yet was neither. A black mist sprang up, which was filled with countless vicious ghosts. It immediately engulfed the embodiment of Allheaven.

The embodiment waved his right finger, which caused the natural and magical laws of the world to form together. A boundless, indescribable will then erupted out.

At this point, the embodiment of Allheaven said, "In front of me, all powers within the Vast Expanse shall be either stripped away or absorbed." The vicious ghosts within the black mist began to tremble, then faded away, as if they were being erased from existence.

However, in the moment before they were about to be completely wiped away, the clone of Patriarch Vast Expanse let out a cold harrumph. Instantly, the black mist sank down on itself, and the vicious ghosts converged together to form... a single vicious ghost, astonishing in appearance!

It had black mist for skin, and looked like the most vicious of spirits. Most shocking of all was how it stooped over at the waist, making it seem almost hunchbacked in appearance. Shockingly, the reason for that was because it carried a world on its shoulders.

Countless buildings could be seen, which resembled Yama King palaces. As for the ghost's arms and legs, they were wrapped and bound by countless black chains. The ghost roared, and power of natural law erupted from the world on its back.

That power was something that not even the embodiment of Allheaven could strip away. That was the power of Patriarch Vast Expanse, the power of... the Ghost!

That power caused an explosive force of expulsion to blast into the embodiment of Allheaven.

The will of Allheaven sighed as his body was shredded into a haze of blood. However, he didn't seem to care. He raised his right hand and point out with his finger, causing intense, gray light to shoot out in all directions. At the same time, the air behind him ripped open, revealing a single finger.

It was a finger which could supercede a world, which could exceed the Heavens. As soon as it appeared, the finger reached out to slam into the vicious ghost.

BOOOOOOOOOOMMM!

Beneath the power of the finger, the ghost trembled, and then began to fall to pieces. The buildings on its back vanished into smoke, crushed like dried weeds. However, at the same time, the chains which covered its limbs wrapped around the finger, binding it tighter and tighter until it exploded.

Apparently, they were evenly matched!

As the sound of the explosion echoed out, the embodiment and the clone staggered backward away from each other.

Patriarch Vast Expanse's clone slowly looked up and, in a voice both hoarse and ancient, said, "You're not taking this kid away!"

A powerful pressure spread out from him, which instantly began to crush down onto the will of Allheaven.

It didn't matter that the embodiment represented the entire starry sky of Allheaven, the clone of Patriarch Vast Expanse didn't show any fear of it whatsoever.

The embodiment of Allheaven looked expressionlessly at Patriarch Vast Expanse's clone, then said, "Oh my eldest son.... You have already departed, what need is there to remain so obsessed?"

With that, he extended his right hand and the pointed out with his

finger.

“Power,” he said. Instantly, explosive power radiated out from him, transforming into an enormous magical symbol, which was in itself covered with even more magical symbols. This symbol represented the natural law of the Dao of power within the starry sky of the Vast Expanse!

This was something that not even 9-Essences cultivators could do.

It was a magical symbol formed from magical symbols, and as soon as it appeared, it bore down on Meng Hao and Patriarch Vast Expanse’s clone.

At this point, all magical laws within the starry sky of Allheaven that had to do with power suddenly faded. They were weakened to form the huge magical symbol which was currently slashing down in attack. Patriarch Vast Expanse’s clone looked on with glittering eyes. He suddenly performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, causing his entire hand to fade. No blood or flesh was visible, neither any bone, only a spectral arm.

It was not black, but multi-colored, and it emanated a Dao, a personal Dao that came when one became an Essence.

It was... the Ghost Dao of Patriarch Vast Expanse!

When his hand made contact with the magical symbol, Heaven shook and the Earth trembled. The lands cracked and split as a shockwave blasted out, shaking the entire necropolis.

By this point, the sculpture in front of Meng Hao was ninety percent dissolved. The final ten percent continued to melt rapidly. Soon ninety-four percent was dissolved. Then ninety-seven, ninety-eight... until finally, one hundred percent!

It was completely dissolved, and the statue no longer present. It now existed as one hundred drops of black liquid, no more, no less. In that very moment, Meng Hao’s senses, which had been sealed completely shut, suddenly opened.

His eyes glowed brightly despite the terrifying fluctuations emanating off of the will of Allheaven. No matter how much that will wanted to kill

him, Patriarch Vast Expanse's clone made it impossible. It was now filled with an intense rage and fury that could only come from being in Meng Hao's presence....

Meng Hao took a deep breath, and as he did, the one hundred drops of black liquid transformed into beams of light that shot into his forehead.

Sounds like rumbling thunder filled his mind, as though a hundred black bolts of lightning were striking his head.

When the last one merged into his forehead, and the final thunderclap rang out, a power that could end the Heavens and crush the Earth rose up in his sea of consciousness.

He began to tremble violently, and a mouthful of frothy blood exploded out of his mouth. The hundred drops of black liquid swirled together within his sea of consciousness, and as they did, the aura of the Ninth Hex began to emanate out!

Although it wasn't complete yet, the moment it exploded out, the embodiment of the will of Allheaven shivered. An expression of fiery rage appeared on his face, and his eyes erupted with killing intent.

"Screw off!" he roared, launching himself toward Patriarch Vast Expanse's clone!

Chapter 1534: Fuse With Me!

Rumbling echoed out, and simultaneously, Patriarch Vast Expanse's clone laughed. He didn't back down even for a moment; black mist swirled as he once again shot forward to block the path of the embodiment of the will of Allheaven.

Behind him, Meng Hao was trembling as the aura of the Ninth Hex exploded out from within him. Even as he shook, the necropolis also trembled, causing boundless ripples to spread out into the starry sky of Allheaven outside.

At the same time, within Meng Hao's sea of consciousness, the one hundred drops of black liquid were rapidly forming a shape!

Ten percent, twenty percent, thirty percent, forty percent....

In the blink of an eye, it reached a state of seventy percent completion. As it did, the complete outline of the Ninth Hex began to appear.

Eighty percent, ninety percent. Before the will of Allheaven could do anything to stop him, Meng Hao closed his eyes yet again. At the same time, a rumbling sound began to fill him, a sound so shocking it could shake Heaven and Earth.

Thunder and lightning boomed in the outside world as well, and although that occurred within the starry sky of Allheaven... it was not caused by the Vast Expanse. Instead, it was caused by the Ninth Hex; it was Heaven-Sealing lightning!

Within Meng Hao's sea of consciousness, the black liquid... had formed into something that caused the starry sky of Allheaven to tremble... the Ninth Hex!

The Seal the Heavens Hex!

In the instant that it appeared, the world of the necropolis shook violently, sending shockwaves out in the starry sky outside. Everything which existed, all living beings, felt themselves trembling, filled with indescribable astonishment.

Apparently... something new had come to exist within the Heavens above... a naturally occurring enemy of Heaven!

Apparently there was a new will which existed in the starry sky of the Vast Expanse!

Apparently, within the countless worlds of reality, there was a new natural law!

It was the Seal the Heavens Hex... a Dao which existed above all other laws!

RUUUUUUMMMMBLLLLLE!

As the intense rumbling sound echoed out, Meng Hao took a deep breath. Then his eyes snapped open. He had completed the first step on his path to Transcendence. He had fully absorbed the Ninth Hex, which had been formed by the accumulation of the nine incarnations of his clone. They were now an inseparable part of him, completely and utterly part of Meng Hao.

However, that was only the first step. Meng Hao was acutely aware that time was of the essence, and that he needed to take the second step as soon as possible.

That second step was...

“Nine Hexes, combine!” Meng Hao said. As soon as the words left his mouth, all surrounding natural and magical laws shattered, as if they simply couldn’t stand up to the domineering existence of the Nine Hexes.

In the moment that Meng Hao prepared to combine the Nine Hexes, the embodiment of the will of Allheaven looked on with widening eyes. A bright light began to shine within those eyes, and at the same time, the void outside of the Vast Expanse began to twist and distort, as a huge eye appeared.

The eye slowly began to open, and when it reached the halfway point, a shockingly powerful will began to surge out from it, its target being Meng Hao. It wanted to prevent him from Transcending.

However, it was at this point that, without any warning, a person appeared in front of the eye. It was a young man with white hair and a cold expression. Furthermore, it was possible to tell that this was a clone, not this person's true self.

The clone looked like Slaughter, as well as the young man who had appeared outside of the Immortal God Continent, the Transcendent cultivator.

He reached out and placed his hand onto the huge eye, preventing it from opening any further.

A tremor ran through the eye, and a roar of rage could be heard. Then, within the boundless void outside the Vast Expanse, a second figure appeared. He was also a young man, and he radiated a sinister aura of death. He had long, violet hair, and his eyes seemed to shine with starlight. His expression was calm as he hovered there, staring at the boundless eye.

As the eye struggled to open, an enraged voice roared, "You people failed back then. You do not qualify to try to eradicate me. You might have become more powerful since then, but you... do not qualify to stand in my way!"

Everything in the area began to tremble and shatter.

However, the two young men didn't seem ruffled at all.

"The Fellow Daoist who can wipe you out is currently Transcending. We might have lost our qualifications, but we can still stop you from interfering."

The eye remained half open, mysterious light glittering within.

Meanwhile, back in the necropolis, the embodiment of the will of Allheaven gritted his teeth. Eyes gleaming with ferocity, he ceased his attempts to call upon power from outside the Vast Expanse, and instead focused on drawing upon the power within the starry sky of the Vast Expanse!

Within the depths of the starry sky were numerous vortexes which housed various worlds and realms. Within thousands of those locations,

bloodcurdling screams echoed out as the living beings there withered up. Their flesh and blood, along with their life force, was all sucked away.

It wasn't just the life forms within those locations. The worlds themselves were all transformed into ash, their World Essences sucked away.

Thousands of worlds were gone in the blink of an eye, completely wiped out of existence. There were even entire regions near the border of the starry sky of Allheaven which withered away as if they had just died.

Most shocking of all was that the energy of Heaven and Earth within the starry sky was suddenly reduced by thirty percent. If it were reduced by any more than that, the entire Vast Expanse would collapse. It was a limit which apparently couldn't be passed.

All of that power was absorbed by the embodiment of the will of Allheaven. It took a single thought to accomplish, and then an indescribable power converged outside of the necropolis, and began to tear it open!

The sky of the necropolis was completely destroyed, revealing the starry sky of the Vast Expanse beyond. The will of Allheaven descended in full, completely destroying the first land mass. Next was the second, third, fourth, and in fact, all of the land masses except for the ninth. Everything was transformed into rubble by the will of Allheaven.

The descending will of Allheaven was like a flood of water. In the blink of an eye, it converged onto its embodiment. Instantly, that embodiment's features twisted and changed. Six more arms sprouted out of its body, giving it a total of eight. Furthermore, three heads emerged!

It had a total of four heads and eight arms!

A roar of rage transformed into a powerful sound wave that blasted into the ninth land mass, causing it to tremble violently. Patriarch Vast Expanse's clone looked on with widening eyes.

"I am... Allheaven!" said the four-headed, eight-armed figure, its voice echoing like thunder. At the same time, its body began to grow blurry,

revealing something completely unexpected inside: countless stars, planets, vortexes and worlds.

It was as if the entire starry sky of the Vast Expanse had become its body. It was using the full power of the starry sky to try to wipe out the clone of Patriarch Vast Expanse.

It would destroy that clone, then wipe out Meng Hao to prevent him from Transcending, and bring everything back under its control!

Patriarch Vast Expanse had only left a clone behind here. However, because of the bronze lamp inside of Meng Hao, that clone chose to help him.

With that bronze lamp, Meng Hao became the legacy successor of Patriarch Vast Expanse. That legacy was a legacy, not of the cultivation base or the bloodline, but rather, of thought!

It was... a continuity of thought, a desire to destroy the will of the starry sky of the Vast Expanse. Because they both harbored that intent, the clone chose to help Meng Hao.

However... it was only a clone. The real Patriarch Vast Expanse was a figure from countless years in the past. It was impossible to say where he was now. As for his clone, he could hold out for a while against the will of Allheaven, but considering how madly that will was fighting, sparing no cost to win... it meant that the clone was reaching its limit.

And yet, it continued to stand against the attack. It was falling apart into destruction, but it knew that if it were completely destroyed, then Meng Hao, who was still in the midst of his effort to combine the Nine Hexes, would be facing grave danger.

In this critical moment, the clone's eyes suddenly flickered. His right hand shot out toward Meng Hao and made a grasping motion. What it was beckoning to though, was not Meng Hao, but the parrot!

The parrot blurred into motion, transforming into the Battle Weapon, which the clone grabbed and slashed out into the air!

Heaven shook and the Earth trembled. A huge rift opened up, which

erupted with the explosive power of time travel. That power became a windstorm which swept out to cover the ninth land mass, as well as the rest of the crumbling necropolis.

Time was being reversed!

Instantly, 10,000 years passed. Then 100,000 years. 1,000,000 years. Endless years blurred by in a tempest, and when everything became clear again, the world was completely different.

The sky was now bright blue, and the eight destroyed land masses were restored. Countless cultivators could be seen flying here and there. It was a bustling, flourishing place.

A gentle breeze blew as the lands of the necropolis returned to ancient times!

The Sect Leader and the others gasped in response. However, it wasn't a huge shock, considering that they had seen similar things occur in the past. Every time the necropolis experienced the apocalyptic catastrophe, it returned to ancient times, when the will of Allheaven destroyed the world.

However, this time it was the clone of Patriarch Vast Expanse who had reversed time, taking all of the memories of the apocalypse which existed in the necropolis and unleashing them early.

With that, the clone took a deep breath, and then stabbed the Battle Weapon down into the ground. Rumbling echoed out as the clone's divine sense filled all the lands with a single thought.

And that thought was... destroy the starry sky of the Vast Expanse!

Chapter 1535: I Am Meng Hao, Here I Transcend!

In the blink of an eye, countless cultivators and other living entities on the land masses settled down cross-legged and combined their divine sense into a massive wave. That wave then surged out like a tempest to batter against the embodiment of the will of Allheaven, with his eight arms and four heads.

You use the life force of the entire starry sky of the Vast Expanse? Well I'll use magic to reach into the past and use the power of my people to fight back!

This was a magical technique that would exceed the comprehension of most cultivators. However, considering the realm Patriarch Vast Expanse was in, time and space could be molded into divine abilities and great Daos.

The four-headed, eight-armed embodiment of the will of Allheaven stared with bright red eyes. Then he waved his arms, unleashing waves of crackling lightning to fight the windstorm.

Rumbling filled the air, and at the same time, thumping sounds emanated out from Meng Hao as his energy erupted, the result of the process of combining his Hexing magic!

"First Hex!" He waved his sleeve, and the Beginning-Ending Hex appeared. That was the beginning of the series of Hexing magics, and also the ending piece in the puzzle that Meng Hao had assembled. He didn't create it himself, of course, but rather, obtained it by means of the legacy of Shui Dongliu, who himself was created by a fragment of the will of Paragon Nine Seals.

After absorbing it, it became Meng Hao's First Hex!

His eyes glittered as the Hex appeared, and at the same time, a point of light began to shine on his forehead. As soon as it did, the redness in the eyes of Allheaven's embodiment grew even more intense.

Then, Meng Hao's eyes flashed as he performed an incantation gesture. He was unleashing the...

"Second Hex!

Real-Unreal Hexing. Finding the real in the unreal, taking the unreal and making it real. A second point of light appeared on Meng Hao's forehead. At first glance it seemed like an illusion, but closer examination revealed that it was corporeal. It even seemed capable of absorbing minds!

That was the Second Hex!

Meng Hao took a deep breath. Thanks to the magic of Patriarch Vast Expanse's clone, Meng Hao was actually standing within an ancient era, although things didn't look very much different than they had before. The sky was blue, and the ground was covered with green limestone. The air was thick with spiritual energy.

From a distance, rainbows could be seen stretching across the sky. As for Patriarch Vast Expanse's clone, he was converging the divine sense of all of the cultivators of his lands and slamming it against the embodiment of the will of Allheaven.

"Third Hex!" Meng Hao's hands flashed in a double-handed incantation gesture, and rumbling sounds filled Heaven and Earth.

The Third Hex was Present-Ancient Hexing, and as soon as it appeared, it instantly harmonized with the current state of the world. A resonance formed, which made sense considering that Meng Hao was surrounded by ancient times, where he himself was from the present. Present and ancient existed simultaneously, causing the power of time to spread out along with the appearance of the Present-Ancient Hex. At the same time, a third point of light appeared on Meng Hao's forehead.

Three points of light glittered radiantly, and Meng Hao's energy continued to rise. Without pausing for a moment, he waved both of his hands out in front of him.

"Fourth Hex!"

The Fourth Hex was among the most powerful of the first eight Hexes. It

was called the Self Hex, and could create seemingly infinite clones, enough to fill an entire world. As soon as it appeared, Meng Hao was immediately surrounded by countless different versions of himself.

One of those figures caused Meng Hao's mind to reel the instant he caught sight of him. It was Little Treasure....

Unfortunately, now was not the time to ponder the matter. Meng Hao immediately glanced away and prepared to perform an incantation gesture to unleash the Fifth Hex. However, it was in that very moment that a massive force surged against him. He shook visibly, and blood sprayed out of his mouth as he was shoved backward.

At the same time, Patriarch Vast Expanse's clone exploded. Just as he was about to reform, the four-headed, eight-armed embodiment of the will of Allheaven waved a sleeve, which instantly slowed down the process. The embodiment of Allheaven was riddled with so many wounds that he looked like a mass of flesh and blood, and yet he instantly charged toward Meng Hao.

Almost as soon as he moved, the divine sense of the countless living beings on the land mass forged a barrier, yet again making it impossible for the embodiment to reach Meng Hao.

"Screw off!" he roared, waving his numerous arms, unleashing massive force against the barrier, which subsequently began to collapse, layer by layer.

Meng Hao's eyes were crimson as he backed up, yet again performing an incantation gesture.

"Fifth Hex!"

The Fifth Hex was the Inside-Outside Hex. As soon as it appeared, a force of expulsion erupted out, creating a black hole in front of Meng Hao. That black hole spun rapidly, shrinking down until it became the fifth point light on Meng Hao's forehead.

By that point, the embodiment of Allheaven had almost completely broken through the barrier. The countless streams of divine sense were in

the midst of collapse.

Meng Hao continued to back up.

“Sixth Hex!”

Life-Death Hexing!

“Seventh Hex!”

Karmic Hexing!

“Eighth Hex!”

Body-Mind Hexing!

When those three Hexing magics emerged from Meng Hao’s hands, brightly colored light flashed in Heaven and Earth, and massive winds screamed. Everything shook violently. It was also in that exact same moment that the embodiment of Allheaven blasted away all of the divine sense of the living beings in the world. Then, he shot forward to appear directly in front of Meng Hao.

As he reached his hand out to wipe Meng Hao out of existence, the pressure radiating off of him caused Meng Hao’s mind to reel. However, even as the pressure crushed down on him, Meng Hao’s eyes glittered brightly, and he unleashed his Ninth Hex!

“Ninth Hex!”

Seal the Heavens Hex!

A mighty power descended, something boundlessly domineering. It was a power that said, If I want your eyes opened, they shall NOT be closed. If I want them closed, they had BETTER not be open!

What I want, the Heavens shall NOT lack! What I don’t want, had BETTER not exist in the Heavens!

“BEGONE!” Meng Hao roared. A power that did not come from the starry sky of Allheaven erupted from the Ninth Hex, something like a mad wind that blasted into the embodiment of the will of Allheaven.

The world shook as that power became an attack force. Meng Hao was

shoved backward, as was the embodiment of Allheaven, whose expression was that of terror. However, his eyes were also filled with intense killing intent. He forced himself to grind to a halt, holding nothing back as he fought against the power. His body trembled violently, and suddenly, two of his heads exploded, as well as several of his arms. And yet, he gritted his teeth and took a step forward.

However, it was at this point that the clone of Patriarch Vast Expanse, whom Allheaven's will had destroyed moments ago, formed back together. He instantly teleported directly in front of the embodiment of Allheaven, whereupon flames erupted from him, along with a terrifying aura.

He waved his right hand, yet again blocking the path of the severely damaged embodiment.

Allheaven's embodiment roared, then transformed into countless motes of light. As they spread out, they flew up into the sky to transform into a gigantic finger!

The boundless, majestic finger stretched down from the starry sky, rumbling down toward Meng Hao and the clone of Patriarch Vast Expanse.

As it descended, countless black flowers appeared on its surface. As they bloomed, vicious creatures flew out, all of them with three heads and six arms. Their energy surged as they charged in attack.

By this point, Meng Hao's Ninth Hex was fully deployed. A ninth point of light appeared on his forehead, whereupon all of the other lights merged together with it to create something that looked like a sun.

Nine Hexes, combined!

Meng Hao threw his head back and roared. Rumbling sounds echoed out, along with the aura of Transcendence. The starry sky shook, and the universe trembled. After the nine Hexes combined, they all transformed into Essences, causing Meng Hao's cultivation base to truly... reach the 9-Essences level!

After that, his cultivation base power skyrocketed, growing intensely

powerful, breaking through all barriers. Wind screamed around him as the finger formed from the will of Allheaven began to shake.

But, things weren't over yet. Meng Hao's eyes were bright red as he looked up and roared, "Converge nine Essences, cultivation base breakthrough!!"

BOOOOOOOOOOMMM! His nine Essences converged together. Nine became one... and the door of Heaven and Earth opened; the limitations of the Vast Expanse were destroyed. A clap of thunder rang out, which could be heard by all lives and in all worlds throughout the starry sky of Allheaven.

Within that thunderclap was Meng Hao's voice, which echoed out through all of the Vast Expanse.

"I am Meng Hao. Here I Transcend!"

Chapter 1536: Extinguishing the Bronze Lamp!

Countless people and other life forms heard the words. They echoed out in the Immortal God Continent, the Devil Realm Continent, countless other worlds and Realms, and even in the Mountain and Sea Butterfly. Everyone heard.

Within the Mountain and Sea Butterfly, many people who knew Meng Hao were left flabbergasted by the words.

Boom!

As soon as the words left his mouth, the entire world within which he stood went completely silent. With his Essences completely combined, an aura which did not belong to the starry sky of the Vast Expanse raged up. It grew more and more powerful, and as it did, countless illusory chains appeared all around Meng Hao. One by one, those chains exploded!

As those chains were destroyed, his aura grew more shocking and incredible. This cultivation base breakthrough put him at a level in which he could... directly fight back against the will of Allheaven!

Within his qi passageways, any power which had anything to do with the natural laws of the Vast Expanse... vanished. They were replaced by a Demonic qi that could shake Heaven and Earth, that could stain the world red. Meng Hao's hair turned crimson, and suddenly, an endless ocean of blood appeared around him.

He had the feeling that this world, this starry sky, could be changed by him with a single thought. He could manipulate it or even destroy it if he wished. At the same time, he felt a force of expulsion appear, something that apparently wanted to drive him away.

The enormous finger up above began to shake, and the three-headed six-armed figures looked at Meng Hao with fear, as if they didn't dare to get close to him.

Meng Hao looked around, and everything seemed different.

He saw the natural and magical laws of the world. He saw threads running here and there. He saw things that he had never been able to see before. He saw that the clone of Patriarch Vast Expanse was actually a Soul Shadow. He saw that the finger up above was actually composed of countless magical symbols, sealing marks.

“So, this is what it feels like to Transcend,” he thought. “It’s too bad... I don’t count as having fully Transcended. Cultivation base, body, and soul. Only by breaking through in all three areas can one truly be considered Transcendent.

“For example, Paragon Nine Seals only achieved fleshly body Transcendence.

“As for me, my cultivation base has Transcended, but not my body or my soul....

“Well, I might as well use my Transcendent cultivation base to extinguish the bronze lamp. With that good fortune, I can then push toward Transcendence with my fleshly body!

“With my cultivation base and my fleshly body both in Transcendence, the resonance they create will enable my soul... to transform, and also step into Transcendence!

“At that time, I will truly be in... the Daosource Realm!

“That is because I will be the source of the Dao, an Essence. What I wish to be natural law, will exist. Whatever magical laws I don’t approve of, will not exist.” With that, he waved his sleeve, and... the bronze lamp appeared!

As of this moment, no one could stop Meng Hao on his path to Transcendence!

Not the starry sky of the Vast Expanse, nor the will of Allheaven!

Within the ancient sky of the necropolis, the enormous finger formed from the embodiment of the will of Allheaven trembled. A brutal aura erupted from within it, raging in all directions, causing everything in Heaven and Earth to blur. Only the finger remained clear.

Rumbling sounds could be heard as the pressure emanating off of Meng Hao because of his breakthrough, was shattered. Meng Hao might have reached this point, but the will of Allheaven could not accept that he might successfully continue to Transcend.

The power of expulsion from the starry sky of the Vast Expanse suddenly exploded out. It affected the entire ancient world, causing all of the cultivators who had appeared to tremble.

Patriarch Vast Expanse's clone looked on with glittering eyes. He was just about to take action, but after looking over at Meng Hao, he smiled slightly and then looked off into the distance, seemingly oblivious to what was happening.

The enormous finger continued to descend, and the lands shook. A huge crevice opened up, spreading out rapidly. Apparently the entire land mass was about to collapse.

The finger superseded the sky, drawing ever closer. Soon, what Meng Hao was looking up at wasn't a finger, it was a series of mountains and plains!

Those were... the fingerprint, within which was the power of the starry sky of the Vast Expanse, a power completely focused on slaying Meng Hao before he could fully Transcend.

However, even as the finger descended, Meng Hao swished his wide sleeve, and the bronze lamp floated up front of him, burning brightly, its appearance ancient, even primitive. Meng Hao took a deep breath. Eyes shining with anticipation and focus, he focused the power of his Transcendent cultivation base, and then...

Blew a breath out of his mouth!

That breath was like a storm, a tempest that linked Heaven and Earth, a cyclone that rose up and slammed into the finger formed by Allheaven.

A huge boom echoed out. The sky shattered and the land crumbled. However, the cyclone was incapable of fighting the destructive finger of Allheaven, and vanished.

However, by the time that happened, Meng Hao's breath, which was backed by the power of his Transcendent cultivation base, had already blown across the bronze lamp. As it did, the flame flickered wildly, then bent over to the side... and was extinguished!

That was Meng Hao's final Soul Lamp!

That was the bronze lamp which he had acquired in a stroke of incredible good fortune, which had saved his life!

That was Patriarch Vast Expanse's bronze lamp!

As of this moment, it was extinguished!

Instantly, green smoke appeared, which rapidly entered Meng Hao's eyes, ears, nose, and mouth.

When the last bit of green smoke left the bronze lamp, it turned into drifting ash. It was as if, after completing its mission, it dissipated into Heaven and Earth.

It was in that exact same moment that the finger of the will of Allheaven, the finger which was bursting with the power to destroy worlds, reached a position 3,000 meters away from Meng Hao.

Meng Hao looked up at the fingerprints, which resembled vast mountains and plains. His clothes were whipping back and forth in the wind, and his hair was completely disheveled.

The finger accelerated.

"DIE!" screamed a voice from nowhere. It seemed to command ultimate authority, to contain within it the natural laws of the Vast Expanse, the power of the starry sky as a whole. All of that was rumbling toward Meng Hao.

It only took a moment for it to be directly in front of Meng Hao. It was as if the Heavens themselves were descending upon him. But Meng Hao simply reached out and pushed against the finger with his hand.

The moment his hand made contact, rumbling sounds filled him, and blood oozed out of the corners of his mouth. Crevices snaked out from

beneath his feet as everything crumbled. The entire land mass shattered into rubble which dropped down. Now there was nothing beneath Meng Hao but an empty starry sky.

However, Meng Hao himself didn't move an inch. He hovered there, bracing himself against the finger of Allheaven. Although blood was oozing out of the corners of his mouth, his eyes shone with a terrifying glow.

His pupils were bright red, which was the foundation of the Demon, and could not be changed. Perhaps instead of calling it Demonic, it would be more appropriate to call it chaotic. It was the ultimate form of chaos, a chaos from within which could be born a completely contradictory natural law.

This was Meng Hao's version of the Demon. However, that was not his Essence. His Essence was more than that. In what had once been the whites of his eyes, a new color appeared. Violet!

He had violet eyes and red pupils, and the aura he emanated was completely impossible to describe with words. It was as if he were the ultimate form of chaos, as if he were completely at odds with the entire world, with Heaven and Earth.

Even as his right hand pushed against the finger, he smiled.

"By this point, nobody can destroy me. Nobody can control my fate. Nobody... is qualified to manipulate my path.

"Even the will of the starry sky of the Vast Expanse... does not qualify!

"You are dismissed!" He shoved his hand forward, and thunderous rumbling emanated out. Beneath his skin could be seen numerous wriggling, snake-like objects. However, they weren't snakes, they were the strands of green smoke he had absorbed from the bronze lamp.

Numerous strands of smoke flowed like mad through his body. They contained boundless life force which strengthened him, causing him to grow more powerful by the moment.

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

Veins bulged out on Meng Hao's neck and face as he took a step forward, pushing onto the finger, which had no choice but to fall back.

It didn't want to, but the power of Meng Hao's fleshly body could shake Heaven and Earth, and was forcing it backward.

The light of time flickered dully, and the world seemed to be on the verge of collapsing completely. An enraged roar echoed out as the finger pushed out with more power than before, still intent on wiping out Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's eyes shone with bright red light. His qi passageways had reached their limit, and began to explode. Countless motes of scintillating light filled his body, and at the same time, his flesh and blood began to transform. His bones, his body, his qi passageways, and even his blood apparently ceased to exist.

However, from the outside, he looked the same as ever. That was because, by this point, his body was neither mortal nor cultivator. A thunderous, Heaven-rending Earth-crushing boom rang out. It was as if the starry sky was bearing witness to Meng Hao as he took another step forward, threw his head back, and let loose a long cry.

Chapter 1537: Daosource Complete!

The sound of the noise split the starry sky, echoing out in all directions. The finger began to tremble as Meng Hao emanated dazzling red light, his hair whipping about around him.

That red light was the same color as his soul and his eyes!

As soon as it appeared, a tremor ran through him, and his fleshly body power broke through to a higher level, to a level that could shake Heaven and Earth. And that was... Transcendence!

The moment he entered Transcendence, it was as if a gate had been opened in Heaven and Earth, a gate that erupted with the power of time. At the same time, Meng Hao's body created a new starry sky.

It was a starry sky that existed inside of him, which transformed into a spinning vortex. He took a deep breath. Now that his fleshly body had Transcended, it meant that, in some ways, even if Heaven and Earth rotted away, he would not.

"Screw the hell off!" Meng Hao roared. His energy skyrocketed, and rumbling sounds echoed out as he violently waved his hand. The enormous finger was shoved backward, and even began to show signs that it would soon fall apart.

As of this moment, not even the clone of Patriarch Vast Expanse could measure up to Meng Hao. After all, he was just a clone, and this was Meng Hao's true self.

He was a being like the Ghost, the God, or the Devil. Although he was only about seventy percent Transcendent, and was still lacking a Transcendent Soul, the energy he could unleash put him in a position to fight back against the finger formed by the will of Allheaven, and in fact, to have the upper hand!

The finger of Allheaven was pushed back, and Meng Hao hovered there in the void, surrounded by boundless crimson light. When he looked up, his eyes shone with piercing light.

“Next to Transcend will be my soul.” He flicked his sleeve, and his cultivation base erupted with terrifying Transcendent power. No one could face such power and not be struck to the heart with fear. It stood above all sorts of natural and magical laws. It was the Daosource.

Everything around Meng Hao twisted and distorted; all Heaven and Earth acknowledged allegiance to him.

As his cultivation base rocketed up, he took a deep breath, which caused the air around him to shatter, as though he were sucking away the life force of his surroundings, causing everything to wither.

At the same time, his Transcendent fleshly body radiated fear-inspiring power that combined with his cultivation base power to form a shocking resonance.

Because of that resonance, his soul began to transform. His aura grew completely petrifying as it spread out in all directions. In the end, his soul completely transformed, leaving Meng Hao fully Transcended. In that moment, his aura, and the terrifying ripples spreading out from him, suddenly vanished. He no longer seemed ostentatiously awe-inspiring. As he hovered there, he actually looked like a mortal.

And yet, because of his current state, the ancientness around him faded away, and the world returned to its previous state. The nine land masses of the necropolis reappeared, and the starry sky formed up above.

Thunder boomed. Down on the ninth land mass, the Sect Leader and the others were trembling, their eyes radiating intense reverence. When they laid eyes on Meng Hao, they gasped, then dropped to their knees.

“Greetings, Transcendor!”

“Greetings, Transcendor!” Jin Yunshan’s eyes were as wide as saucers, and Sha Jiudong’s mind was reeling. Bai Wuchen appeared to be in a daze. All three were trembling. The pressure from Meng Hao completely enveloped them, and the feeling exceeded even that of Heavenly might. It was as if a single glance from him could kill them where they stood.

“Greetings, Transcendor!” All three immediately kowtowed.

“Greetings, Transcendor!” The other 9-Essences Paragons took deep breaths and also kowtowed, their eyes filled with reverence, fanaticism, and awe.

These were 9-Essences cultivators who hadn’t kowtowed to anyone for countless years. But now, they didn’t hesitate to bend over until their foreheads were touching the ground. They didn’t hesitate at all to offer him the most formal of respectful greetings.

Within the starry sky of the Vast Expanse, Transcendent cultivators were something out of legends. They were individuals who could single-handedly destroy worlds with impunity. They were Essences unto themselves, who not even the will of the Vast Expanse could interfere with.

Transcendence, and the Daosource Realm, were completely independent of natural and magical law. Such cultivators were their own form of natural law, and gave birth to their own Essence.

They were completely and utterly independent!

The Sect Leader and the other 9-Essences cultivators weren’t the only ones to kowtow. The countless ghosts who were still waiting off in the distance all looked at Meng Hao with complete reverence, then dropped to their knees and kowtowed.

“Greetings, Transcendor!”

Within the starry sky of the Vast Expanse, countless entities, countless life forms, countless worlds, were all shaking. All living things looked in the direction of the necropolis, and bowed their heads.

It was an impulse from within their souls. Although they didn’t know who it was who had Transcended, they could feel it, as though new Heavens had suddenly appeared up above.

From ancient times until now, throughout the countless years which had passed, there had only been three true Transcendent cultivators. The Ghost. The Devil. The God. But now, there was a fourth!

He possessed unending command over magic.

He was of the Boundless Dao.

He was of Heaven Trampling.

He was... Meng Hao!

Suddenly, the finger which had been formed by the will of the starry sky of the Vast Expanse, the finger that had just collapsed, formed back together. Simultaneously, thousands upon thousands of worlds withered up. All living things within them instantly died, their life forces sucked away to fuel the new finger.

Rumbling could be heard as the finger began to descend toward Meng Hao in shocking fashion.

Meng Hao looked up, his expression calm. Then he lifted his right hand and pointed out with his index finger.

As he did, the red, rippling light which surrounded him rose up into the air, swirling around and around in circles as it transformed into the image of a finger, a finger that could match up in every way to the finger formed by the will of Allheaven. Without any pause, the crimson finger began to fly up into the air.

When the two huge fingers collided, it seemed as if the entire starry sky of the Vast Expanse were about to be destroyed. A shockwave blasted out in all directions which that could not be described with words.

The finger formed by the will of Allheaven shook violently and then exploded, becoming countless motes of crystalline light. As for the finger formed by Meng Hao's personal Essence, it also exploded into a blast of red light.

As soon as the finger formed by Allheaven's will collapsed, the seemingly infinite motes of light that appeared suddenly transformed into lightning bolts. Rumbling could be heard as the endless bolts of lightning shot down toward Meng Hao.

This was Tribulation Lightning, sent by the starry sky of the Vast Expanse as Transcendence Tribulation.

Any one of those bolts of lightning could wipe a peak 9-Essences expert out of existence. As they descended en masse toward Meng Hao, he let out a light sigh.

Then he waved his right hand, causing all of the light which had formed his finger moments ago to coalesce into the shape of a gigantic head.

It had a solitary horn jutting out of it, and flickering red eyes. As it faced the incoming lightning, it grinned viciously, then opened its mouth and began to breathe in.

Instantly, the lightning bolts began to twist, and were subsequently sucked into the mouth of the huge head. The head looked up at the starry sky, then began to shrink down, flying toward Meng Hao's palm, where it eventually became a spinning vortex.

The spinning vortex was only the size of a hand, but there seemed to be no end to it on the inside, as though it contained countless heavenly bodies, as if it had its own starry sky.

Everything went completely silent. Patriarch Vast Expanse's clone looked thoughtfully at the vortex in Meng Hao's palm. At the same time, a figure appeared within the starry sky of the necropolis.

It was merely an outline, and inside of it could be seen ninety-eight fruits. It was exactly the same entity Meng Hao had laid eyes on in the Demon pillar outside the Vast Expanse.

It was none other than the true body which was being rebuilt by the will of the starry sky of the Vast Expanse.

It was hard to say exactly when he had appeared up there, but there he floated up, looking down at Meng Hao. He seemed especially focused on the starry sky vortex Meng Hao held in his hand.

Meng Hao looked up at the figure.

After a long moment, the outline spoke, its voice cool. "Half a step into Ancestor...."

With one final look at Meng Hao, he faded away.

“Half a step into Ancestor....” Meng Hao smiled. It was only after his cultivation base, fleshly body, and soul had all entered Transcendence that he realized the truth. When it came to Transcendence, the Daosource Realm wasn’t the only Realm.

There was another Realm, which was the Ancestor....

That was the peak of Transcendence. As for Meng Hao, when he Transcended, he went all the way to the great circle. In fact, he went beyond that, taking him half a step into the Ancestor Realm.

The hallmark of the Ancestor Realm was that a starry sky, a world, would appear within one’s own body.

The nine land masses were completely silent. Meng Hao looked over at Patriarch Vast Expanse’s clone, then clasped hands and bowed deeply.

“Many thanks, Patriarch!”

He said nothing more. However, the assistance provided to him by Patriarch Vast Expanse was something he would never forget. He bowed with complete sincerity and gratitude.

Patriarch Vast Expanse’s clone looked at Meng Hao, face expressionless.

“The three people who came before you have long since left,” he said coolly. “Perhaps they have returned, but it would only be to observe a bit before leaving again. Compared to the Universe in which they exist, this place is insignificant.

“I’m just a clone, and my days are numbered. At the most, I will last another 10,000 years before passing away into meditation. Then I will vanish. However, it is a true blessing to have been able to witness a fourth Fellow Daoist Transcend here in my old home.” Patriarch Vast Expanse’s clone smiled, then stepped back toward the huge throne. The rocks flew back up into the air, covering him, transforming yet again into a huge statue. Soon, everything looked like before, with the statue staring out over his homeland.

Chapter 1538: A Universe!

The first through eighth land masses, which had been pulverized into nothing more than dust, were now reformed just as they had been. Everything in the necropolis was just as it had been before.

Meng Hao once again clasped hands and bowed deeply. By now, he had abandoned his idea of taking the ghosts away to fight for him. It wasn't that he was incapable of doing such a thing; rather, it was not the right thing to do.

This was their home. They had been born here, and they had died here. It was a place they shouldn't be separated from.

Meng Hao took a deep breath, then turned and waved his sleeve, sweeping up the Sect Leader and the others. He took a step forward, and without the need for any teleportation portal, was instantly outside of the necropolis.

As soon as he appeared in the starry sky of the Vast Expanse, he could sense a terrifying power of expulsion pushing against him, and could even hear what sounded like the voice of the will of Allheaven.

“Leave. Leave. Leave... LEAVE this place!”

Meng Hao looked up at the starry sky. The feeling of being expelled was intense. All of the natural and magical laws within the starry sky of the Vast Expanse, all of the Essences, were now trying to expel him.

He, a Transcendent being, was something that the starry sky of the Vast Expanse could not accept. Wherever he stood, he replaced all Essences, all natural laws and all magical laws.

That, of course, created a conflict.

Meng Hao's expression was normal as he looked away from the starry sky toward the Sect Leader and the others. All of them were panting, and as soon as he looked at them, they quickly bowed.

“Congratulations, exalted Transcendor...”

As he hovered there in the starry sky, Meng Hao realized that all existence, even the starry sky, were contained within his thoughts.

Before, the Vast Expanse had seemed endless and infinite, but now, he could send his divine sense out to its borders.

Of course, the borders were so distant that even someone at the peak of 9-Essences couldn't reach them within a lifetime. As such, it wasn't necessarily incorrect to call the starry sky of the Vast Expanse neverending.

Before, there was something about the Vast Expanse that Meng Hao had been incapable of noticing. But now, he could clearly see that the starry sky... contained countless rifts.

Some were large and some were small, but they filled the starry sky, and also emanated an aura of decay, which was the source of the mist that filled the Vast Expanse.

That decay was a sign of imminent death, of age, of weakness. This starry sky was on the verge of dying.

It was like an old man lying on his deathbed. However, the starry sky didn't wish to pass away into death, which was why all of this was happening. As of this point, Meng Hao understood everything.

If he wanted to, he could rip open the starry sky and step outside of the Vast Expanse. He could enter the void outside, where the five columns existed.

Were it his wish, he could rip his way out of the Vast Expanse... to enter the true Universe.

In fact, he had already been outside in the past. He suddenly sent his divine sense raging out in all directions. He suppressed the power of expulsion, driving it away, then sent his divine sense out through the rifts filling the starry sky, rifts that only Transcendent cultivators could see. That allowed him to see what was outside of the starry sky of the Vast Expanse.

He saw a quiet void, filled with dust and desolation.

Back before he had Transcended, this sight didn't leave much of an impression on him, other than the feeling that it had once been a beautiful and flourishing place.

Now, that feeling was stronger than ever. In fact, he even noticed signs that living beings had once existed out here. Based on the desolation which surrounded the Vast Expanse on the outside, he was sure that ages ago, before the will of Allheaven had grown old, there had been countless heavenly bodies and worlds out here.

There had been many forms of life which multiplied and grew. However, as the will of Allheaven grew old, the starry sky began to wither, beginning with the area outside the Vast Expanse.

The planets here were broken and crumbled. Everything was dead, and the only thing that remained behind amidst the rubble... were the five columns.

After pondering the pervasive aura of death for a moment, he sent his divine sense even further out. Soon, it filled the entire area that was immediately outside of the Vast Expanse. It was then that he noticed a barrier, filled with rifts. Non-Transcendent cultivators could spend a lifetime and never pass through that barrier, but for Transcendent cultivators, it would be as simple as breathing.

A moment later, Meng Hao's divine sense saw a new starry sky. Instantly, his heart began to pound.

What he was looking at... was something which could truly be called infinite... the Universe!

Based on his divine sense, he couldn't see its borders at all. There was resplendent, dazzling light, and a seemingly endless sea of stars, filled with countless vortexes and other heavenly bodies.

Some of them were dim, some were bright. Some were withering in death, some seemed to have only recently been born.

Meng Hao turned to look back at the Vast Expanse Realm, and his eyes gleamed with enlightenment.

“So, this is what Patriarch Vast Expanse’s clone referred to... the Universe. The Vast Expanse Realm is just one whirlpool of stars within this boundless Universe.” He shook his head at the realization that the Vast Expanse Realm was simply a small part of the Universe. You could even say that it was like a seed. Inside the seed was the Vast Expanse, and outside of it... was the Universe as a whole.

Out in the Universe, everything was quiet. He could see countless other whirlpools of stars, and it was very possible to imagine that they were full of their own various worlds.

“The others who Transcended before me all went out into the Universe,” he murmured. Each whirlpool of stars was a world, and only by Transcending could one be qualified to leave that world.

It was impossible to say how many living things there were in the Universe, but one could imagine that there were definitely other Transcendent beings there. Most likely, many more existed than the few who had emerged from the starry sky of the Vast Expanse. However, when compared to the Universe as a whole, such people... would still be incredibly rare, as rare as phoenix feathers or qilin horns.

As he looked out at the Universe, Meng Hao felt the impulse to go out, to explore it. There was surely a much longer path for him to walk out there.

Perhaps, years later, he might even encounter the Ghost, the God, and the Devil....

In the end, he retracted his divine sense and quelched that impulse. There was still far too much unfinished business within the Vast Expanse Realm.

After returning to his body, his eyes shone with profound light. He almost looked like the young scholar he had been thousands of years ago on Mount Daqing.

Now that he had Transcended, there were no traces of age at all on his face. However, the ancient look within his eyes was even more prominent.

He heard the Sect Leader and the others greeting him formally.

Apparently, time moved differently for him now. From the moment he had sent his divine sense out into the Universe, until the moment it returned, only enough time had passed to speak a single sentence.

The words, "Congratulations, exalted Transcendor," were still echoing out as Meng Hao looked off in the direction of the Mountain and Sea Butterfly.

"Call me the Demon Sovereign," Meng Hao said coolly.

The Sect Leader and the others shivered. Bowing their heads, they said, "Greetings, Demon Sovereign!"

Even as everyone offered greetings, Jin Yunshan took a deep breath. He had failed to Transcend, but Meng Hao had succeeded. As such, he was quick to realize that any hope he had in Transcending lay with Meng Hao.

Furthermore he could sense how vastly different he was from Meng Hao in terms of power. It was as if a single word from Meng Hao could alter natural law. It was as if a single thought from him could become Essence. It was as if a single action on his part could shake the entire starry sky.

In his view, Meng Hao was now on equal footing with the legendary Patriarch Vast Expanse. Because of the vast disparity between them, he also had the feeling that he could not be able to step into Transcendence any time soon.

"Exalted Demon Sovereign," he said. "I am willing to be a slave for you as your vanguard. I will lead the Vast Expanse School to slaughter the Immortal God Continent and the Devil Realm Continent!"

The Sect Leader's heart trembled, and he immediately voiced similar words. The others all did the same.

Trembling, Immortal Bai Wuchen stepped forward and bowed deeply. "Your humble servant is willing to do anything for you, oh exalted one. I only hope that in the end... you will return me to my home outside the Vast Expanse."

Even as she bowed, she looked at Meng Hao with anticipation, focus, and hope.

Meng Hao looked back at her for a moment before replying, "You really wish to go back outside the Vast Expanse?"

"Exalted one," she replied, "I beg for your aid in doing so. I was born outside the Vast Expanse, in the Vast Expanse Society. My family, my friends, my roots... are all outside the Vast Expanse." From the way she looked at Meng Hao, she seemed to be pleading with him.

Meng Hao sighed softly. By this point, he realized that all of Bai Wuchen's memories were illusions. In fact, all of the people on Planet Vast Expanse who had supposedly descended from above had had their memories altered by the will of Allheaven. All of those people had been put in place by that will.

That included Han Bei. As for exactly why that was, Meng Hao wasn't sure. However, he was absolutely certain that it had something to do with Planet Vast Expanse.

"Once everything is concluded," he said coolly, "if you still wish to go back outside the Vast Expanse, I will help you." With that, he made a grasping motion, and a soul strand appeared in his hand.

It was a middle-aged man who had a third eye on his forehead. After he appeared, he trembled, then immediately kowtowed to Meng Hao. Apparently, he didn't dare to speak even a word.

That soul was... the true Ninth Paragon of the Vast Expanse School.

Chapter 1539: The Meat Jelly Shall Be Resurrected

Back in their original encounter, Meng Hao had promised to eventually release him from being sealed. Now, he was making good on that promise. With the wave of a finger, he created something from nothing, providing a new fleshly body for the Ninth Paragon's soul.

The others were shaken by what they saw, and their desire to reach Transcendence themselves became even stronger.

"Many thanks, exalted one!" cried the Ninth Paragon, his heart filled with both excitement and bitterness. Long ago, he had smugly assumed that he would rise to glory after descending. How could he ever have imagined that his soul would have been sealed by Meng Hao, who would then assume his identity to rise to power?

In the two thousand years which had passed, Meng Hao had Transcended, while he himself remained in the 9-Essences level.

However, he felt no resentment. Instead, he dropped to his knees and kowtowed over and over again.

Meng Hao looked around at the group of Paragons and said, "Any of you who wish to join me can meet me half a month from now outside of Planet Vast Expanse."

With that, he swished his sleeve, took a step forward, and vanished.

Everyone rose to their feet and exchanged glances. All of them were visibly moved by what had just occurred. A moment later, they transformed into beams of light which shot off in the direction of Planet Vast Expanse.

Meng Hao made his way alone out into the starry sky. Following his memories, he returned to the location near the Mountain and Sea Butterfly where he had been teleported away by the meat jelly.

Based on the parrot's memories, he then began to search for the location

where he had fully fused with the bronze lamp. What he wanted to find... was the place where the meat jelly's aura had finally dissipated.

That location was where he was most confident that he could reverse what had occurred in the starry sky of the Vast Expanse, and... resurrect the meat jelly!

He would essentially grab the meat jelly's soul from within the will of Allheaven and drag it out.

Several hours later, Meng Hao reached his destination, where he looked around for a moment in both grief and anticipation.

He could tell that this was the location where the meat jelly, still in armor form, had died in the midst of defending him.

Meng Hao made a grasping gesture with his right hand, and a fossilized suit of armor appeared. The parrot flew out, its expression the same as Meng Hao's, that of grief and anticipation.

Meng Hao carefully laid the armor out in front of him in the exact spot where the meat jelly had died. Eyes glittering, he performed a double-handed incantation gesture and then placed both hands down onto the armor.

The starry sky filled with rumbling sounds as ripples spread out in all directions.

Meng Hao's eyes shone with a strange light, and his expression was very serious as he unleashed Hexing magics, one type after another. Eventually, the Ninth Hex appeared, whereupon he lifted his right foot up and then stamped it down.

"By the power of my name, I hereby alter natural law, reverse time, and overturn the starry sky. Meat jelly, I call upon your soul to return from the stream of time!" His voice seemed to be filled with strange, magical power. Instantly, the surrounding laws of magic and nature began to twist and distort. It was as if the area in front of Meng Hao was being wrenched out of the control of the will of Allheaven, and conforming to Meng Hao's Dao.

The natural and magical laws in the area all transformed into spiralling threads, which merged together to form a mighty river. It was a river formed, not from water, but from the fragments of time which existed in the starry sky of the Vast Expanse. Within that flowing river were numerous vicious beasts, one of which was a crocodilian creature fully 30,000 meters long. As it rose up from within the river, it looked like a hulking island.

“Who has the gall to unleash Hexing magic to disturb the flow of time!?” it roared in a voice like thunder. “Anyone who commits the sin of altering with time shall be imprisoned for all eternity!” It looked like a paramount celestial being, radiating pressure in all directions. However, when it saw Meng Hao, its eyes went wide, and it shivered in terror.

This creature was the embodiment of countless souls fused together, and could control the river of time. It had never seen Meng Hao before, but was aware that there were four people within the starry sky of the Vast Expanse who had Transcended, and could fight with the will of Allheaven.

As soon as it laid eyes on Meng Hao, it realized who he was, and instantly changed its tone of voice.

“Ex-exalted... exalted one... your humble servant didn’t see you just now, um... what are your orders, exalted one? I will go through hell or high water to fulfil your every request.”

Meng Hao looked calmly at the crocodilian creature, then waved his finger at the river of time. Instantly, the entire river slowed down and stopped.

That affected the flow of time everywhere within the starry sky of the Vast Expanse. All beings and entities, regardless of their nature, were suddenly rendered immobile.

The crocodilian creature shivered. A divine ability like this which could suspend the flow of time was something that surpassed any and all natural laws. Even this creature was incapable of moving, and could do nothing more than watch as Meng Hao reached his hand out into the river of time.

It seemed almost like a casual gesture. Instantly, countless motes of time appeared in front of him within the starry sky of the Vast Expanse. They were events which had occurred in a previous life, numerous images that would cause even the mind of a 9-Essences Paragon to reel. Only a Transcendent cultivator would be able to do something like this, to reverse fate and alter reality.

Meng Hao didn't pause for a moment. He quickly found the meat jelly's soul within the river of time, two thousand years in the past. He could see himself, and the meat jelly in armor form. He saw the meat jelly die.

He watched as the meat jelly's soul flew away. Just when it was about to vanish into the void, he reached out and gently laid ahold of the soul.

The entire process only took a few breaths' worth of time. A moment later, he held a soul strand in his hand.

When the parrot saw the meat jelly's soul, its eyes lit up with hope.

A warm look could be seen in Meng Hao's eyes as he placed the meat jelly's soul onto the fossilized suit of armor. Instantly, a howl echoed out through the starry sky as the will of Allheaven tried to interfere.

To the will of Allheaven, Meng Hao's actions were a brazen provocation. He was interfering with something that belonged solely to that will.

Souls of entities which had died were supposed to return to the starry sky of the Vast Expanse, but Meng Hao was completely defying that arrangement.

As the howl echoed out, the formerly still starry sky of the Vast Expanse suddenly returned to normal. The river of time flowed once more, and the crocodilian creature shivered and sank back down into its depths, not daring to even show its face.

It was well aware that it could not participate in a battle between Meng Hao and the starry sky itself.

Chapter 1540: The Return of Lord Third!

The howl echoed out near and far, in all times and places, seemingly intent on burying Meng Hao. As for Meng Hao, he simply snorted coldly.

Immediately, ripples spread out, distorting everything as they spread out, seemingly taking the surrounding area and cutting it away from the starry sky of the Vast Expanse.

Ignoring the howl coming from the will of the starry sky, Meng Hao pushed the meat jelly's soul down into the armor with his right hand.

In the blink of an eye, the fossilized armor suddenly turned sleek and glossy. Then, it began to twitch and wriggle, as if life were being breathed into it.

Immediately, the will of the starry sky of the Vast Expanse began to descend, but before it could reach him, Meng Hao's eyes flickered with cold light. His right hand flashed with an incantation gesture, unleashing the Ninth Hex with the wave of a finger.

"How dare you try to threaten me with this paltry show of force. Don't come at me again until you're ready to pull out all the stops. Screw off!" Although he spoke calmly, every word echoed like thunder, causing rumbling sounds to echo out in all directions.

Instantly, the will of the starry sky of the Vast Expanse was crushed, destroyed as easily as a dried twig.

Paying the will of the starry sky no further heed, Meng Hao looked back at the meat jelly. More and more life force was building up inside of it, until it finally resumed its original form!

It opened its eyes, looking around in confusion before noticing Meng Hao and the parrot. It smiled.

"Hahaha!" squawked the parrot. "Third Bro, you're finally back!" It was so excited it couldn't stand still. It immediately flew over to the meat jelly and said, "Come, come. Do you remember Lord Fifth?"

The meat jelly blinked, and without even thinking about it muttered,

“Who are you calling Third Bro? You can’t say that. It’s immoral. It’s wrong. Lord Third is going to convert you... Lord Third... Lord Third....” Its eyes widened, and it glanced back and forth between the parrot and Meng Hao. Then it looked around the area in general. “Hey, what happened? I feel like I just woke up from a dream. In the dream, I died, and Haowie was also about to die.... Wait a second....”

The parrot began laughing uproariously in its high-pitched voice, and Meng Hao joined in. Meng Hao looked at the meat jelly, his gaze warm. He felt that this was one of the truly happy moments in his life.

“I will ensure that all which was lost is restored....” he thought. Taking a deep breath, he waved his sleeve, and a blast of wind rose up. The excited parrot and the confused meat jelly vanished.

After they all left, the natural and magical laws in the area returned to normal. The will of the starry sky of the Vast Expanse converged into the vague form of a person, who hovered there alone, looking in the direction Meng Hao had just vanished in, its eyes flickering with the intense desire to kill.

One day later... in another corner of the starry sky of the Vast Expanse.... Three land masses existed inside of an enormous vortex. They were filled with an aura of death, and contained no cultivators, only countless lizards of varying sizes.

Those lizards had fully occupied the three land masses, and were now the rulers of this place.

The central land mass was actually an enormous basilisk lizard, which spent most of its time in slumber. The world which existed on its back was a Holy Land occupied by its descendants.

All of a sudden, a figure appeared within the vortex. It was a young man in a long white robe, who looked like a mortal scholar.

He was none other than the Transcended Meng Hao!

On his shoulder was the parrot, who had a little silver bell attached to its foot. A face could be seen on that bell, and it didn’t look confused at all. In

fact, it was arguing with the parrot.

In the day that had passed, the parrot had explained everything to the meat jelly, including how Meng Hao had resurrected it. The meat jelly was simple-minded to begin with, so it quickly recovered from its confusion and began to talk incessantly.

“Shut up, you three-counting old fart!” the parrot squawked. “Do Lord Fifth a favor and just shut up!”

The meat jelly glared angrily at the parrot. “Lord Third was dead for countless three-year-periods. Countless three-year-periods, you hear me? You can’t even count them. That’s not countless two-year-periods, and not countless one-year-periods either. It’s definitely not countless zero-year-periods....” If it could, it would have continued on in this line of reasoning, but after thinking for a bit, it realized that its ability to count really was quite limited.

“Anyway, I haven’t been able to talk for countless three-year-periods. That simply won’t do. I have to make up for all of the things I would have said during those countless three-year-periods! There are also countless bullies that I didn’t convert during those countless three-year-periods. That’s wrong! That’s immoral. I’m a sinner... I have to make up for all of it!” The meat jelly was not happy at all, and if it had arms and legs at the moment, it would be waving and stamping them wildly.

The parrot and meat jelly argued back and forth, and Meng Hao smiled the entire time. He didn’t feel annoyed at all. It had been two thousand years since he had experienced this sensation, and it felt like he was with family.

He hovered there in the void, looking around. This was the same place where he had found the first copper mirror shard, which he took from within the body of the gigantic lizard. Before leaving, he had mentioned that he would return to take the lizard away as his subordinate.

Back then, the old lizard had mocked his words inwardly, and yet, here Meng Hao was.

Smiling, Meng Hao said, “Hey lizard, an old friend has come for a visit,

why haven't you come out yet?" His voice filled the three worlds in the vortex, causing all of the lizards to suddenly go stiff. At the same time, an enraged roar echoed out from the central land mass.

The entire land mass began to move as the huge basilisk lizard lifted its head. As it glared in fury at Meng Hao, an intense pressure erupted out from within it.

"Dammit, you little punk, how dare you show your face in front of... wait... what?" The huge lizard's first reaction upon seeing Meng Hao was to roar with rage. However, before it could finish speaking, its eyes went wide with disbelief. Then it gasped.

Meng Hao hadn't unleashed any pressure at all, but as soon as the old lizard caught wind of his aura, it could tell that something was off. Staring at him, it began to tremble. Although it had never encountered a Transcendent cultivator before, it could instantly tell what Meng Hao was. It could sense that a single glance from Meng Hao could completely eradicate it.

"... Transcendor?" The old lizard's mind felt as if it were being toppled over.

"What did you call me just now?" Meng Hao asked coolly.

The old lizard shivered, and its eyes darted back and forth for a moment before it looked back at Meng Hao with a gaze of awe and reverence.

"A true genius, someone you might only see once in a hundred years! Heaven has laid its eyes upon me with grace, otherwise little old me would never get to lay eyes on a Chosen like this!" An expression of gratitude appeared on the lizard's face, and even as its words were echoing about, it bowed its head in respect.

"Many thanks, exalted one, many thanks. The fact that I've been able to lay eyes on you makes my entire life worth it, oh exalted one. What's more, I've actually been able to see you twice! Oh exalted one, back then, I could sense that you were beyond ordinary. Exalted one, your gaze is like the gaze of an eagle or a wolf. Back then, your bearing was that of a noble hero, striding forth like the dragon or tiger. You seemed like an intrepid

and honorable warrior, gripping your sword as you patrolled vigilantly!”

Meng Hao looked at the lizard through the slitted eyes of a smile. Discerning someone’s true feelings by seeing their reaction to your brown-nosing was a childish ploy that Meng Hao had come to master long ago. Although he was a bit surprised that the old lizard would speak in such a manner, he took it in stride.

However, the parrot and meat jelly looked over with looks of complete disdain.

“Uncouth!” the parrot said with a snort.

“Shameless!” the meat jelly said with a cold harrumph, its eyes shining with contempt.

The old lizard was at the peak of 9-Essences, and thus had no choice but to speak words to Meng Hao that it actually found revolting. However, it still had the same temper it always had, so the reactions from the parrot and meat jelly left it feeling even more humiliated than before. It instantly glared over at the parrot and meat jelly, eyes shining with a ferocious light.

“Well, what have we here?” squawked the parrot, flapping its wings excitedly as it looked at the lizard. “Not going to back down?”

“Come, come, Third Bro, we need to have some words with this old bastard. Let’s see, how many mistakes did it make when it was speaking just now!?”

A popping sound could be heard as the bell transformed into the usual meat jelly shape. It looked over at the old lizard, and began to speak in a very wise and knowing tone: “I’m not going to give a lecture here, but listen, you need to do things earnestly. Even when you’re brown-nosing, you have to do it earnestly. Only by doing things earnestly can you do things well. You need to brown-nose as if you were practicing cultivation. That’s the way to do things perfectly. Ai. All this reminds of something that happened countless three-year-periods ago. It was a fine spring day when....” The meat jelly continued speaking emotionally. However, before it could say much more, the parrot smacked it with a wing.

“Hurry up and get to the point!”

Off to the side, Meng Hao looked on with amusement. He suddenly felt very warm inside. Seeing the parrot and meat jelly talking like this reminded him of memories from more than two thousand years in the past.

After being smacked by the parrot, the meat jelly wasn't very happy at all. The old lizard looked on with wide eyes, unable to keep himself from wondering if this meat jelly and this parrot were complete idiots. However, even as the thought occurred to him, the meat jelly cleared its throat.

“Fine, fine. Listen up, old lizard. Again, I'm not going to be giving any lectures. However, I couldn't help but notice that you mentioned something about only being able to see someone once in a hundred years, right? Nonsense! Rubbish! You call that brown-nosing? A hundred years? My little Haowie is a Chosen you couldn't see once in 100,000 years. No wait. From the beginning of the starry sky of the Vast Expanse, to now, there's never been anyone like him!” The meat jelly's eyes glowed with ardor. As soon as the words left its mouth, everything went quiet, and the old lizard gaped in shock.

Chapter 1541: Lost in the Act!

The meat jelly cleared its throat and then, seemingly without the slightest bit of shame, continued on in a loud voice. “And then there was the second thing you said. Heaven laid its eyes upon you? Do you even know how to talk? What is that supposed to mean? Heaven has eyes? What you should have said is this: ‘Oh Heavens, dig out my eyes, because after seeing a Chosen like this, I don’t need them!’”

The parrot was off to the side, muttering in irritation.

Meng Hao blinked, and couldn’t hold back from coughing dryly.

As for the old lizard, its eyes were as wide as saucers as it stared at the meat jelly. It couldn’t suppress the feeling that it had truly run into a master of speech....

“Remember, when you’re brown-nosing, you have to determine exactly what type of person you’re talking to. Some people like a bit of exaggeration mixed in with the truth. Others like complete and utter exaggeration. Therefore, before you begin brown-nosing, you need to analyze the personality of the person in question. At a single glance, you can tell that Haowie is a clever rogue. With people like that, you can’t rely on ordinary methods. You have to exaggerate, go overboard. The thicker you lay it on, the better. The highest realm of brown-nosing is not the level where you make yourself sick. No, the highest level... is where you actually believe what you are saying is true. That is a level that is not to be trifled with!” As the meat jelly continued to lecture in a very knowledgeable fashion, its expression was very somber. It seemed genuinely irritated at the shortcomings of the old lizard.

The lizard began to sweat nervously.

“And then there’s the last thing you said. It was far too long-winded. Alright, how about this? You just watch me. I’ll show you what the highest level looks like.” A popping sound could be heard as the meat jelly suddenly transformed into a little lizard. Its tongue flicked out of its mouth for a moment, and its eyes began to burn with passion. It was even

trembling, and smoke began to rise up from its skin.

Its burning gaze seemed capable of melting mountains of ice. It was as if it were looking at the most perfect of all creations. It suddenly plopped down to prostrate itself to Meng Hao, then cried out in the most moving of voices, “Oh exalted one, I absolutely, positively must become your subordinate, sir, and bathe in the radiance of your light. If you dare to refuse me, sir, then I... will kill myself in front of your very eyes. If you try to stop me, I will kill myself this minute!” The meat jelly seemed to be lost in the act. It stuck its tongue out as if in preparation to bite it off if Meng Hao didn’t agree.

In fact, it even began to emanate the fluctuations of self-detonation. The parrot stared in shock for a moment, then smacked the meat jelly viciously to remind it that it was acting....

“Damned bird!” the meat jelly roared. “Get the hell out of my way. I’m the most respected lizard in the entire starry sky of the Vast Expanse! However, as of this day, I have come to understand that my mission in life has been to wait for your appearance, oh master!

“Sir, if you dare to say the word ‘no,’ then I will kill myself immediately!” The fluctuations of self-detonation continued to grow more and more intense. Soon the entire area seemed to be on the verge of being destroyed. Cracking sounds emanated out, and rifts opened up which emanated crimson, destructive light.

Meng Hao’s eyes were wide, and the parrot seemed completely exasperated. Seeing that the meat jelly really did seem to be on the verge of self-detonating, he quickly said, “Yes, I accept. I accept!”

Finally, the meat jelly nodded in satisfaction. The signs of self-detonation faded away, and a popping sound rang out as the meat jelly returned to its usual form. It had been so engrossed in the act that it was completely exhausted. Furthermore, forcibly stopping the imminent self-detonation had resulted in some injuries. However, the meat jelly didn’t seem to care. Looking proudly over at the old lizard, it said, “Now do you see how wrong you were?!”

The lizard remained in place, trembling and panting as it stared at the meat jelly. Suddenly, it was as if it had experienced an epiphany. Countless lightning bolts blasted around in its mind, removing the mists that had blocked enlightenment.

It had never encountered anything like the meat jelly before. Moments ago, it had been more than obvious the meat jelly really had initiated a self-detonation. If Meng Hao hadn't acted when he did... the meat jelly might have actually blown itself up.

The old lizard took a deep breath, then clasped hands and bowed to the meat jelly, its expression one of deep respect. It was feeling very torn, and was actually considering asking the meat jelly to teach it more when Meng Hao cleared his throat.

"Alright, enough with the ruckus," he said. "Listen, old lizard, you can follow me for a thousand years if you want. And if not, I won't force you." With that, he flicked his sleeve and made his way off into the distance.

The parrot and meat jelly immediately followed after him. After a moment passed, the meat jelly looked back ruefully at the lizard.

The lizard hesitated for a moment, then clenched its jaw and flew after them.

It was still feeling somewhat unsettled, and thus didn't notice that the meat jelly and parrot were apparently transmitting messages to each other.

"Well, what did you think of that?" the meat jelly transmitted proudly. "From now on, Lord Third has some hired muscle. That old lizard's cultivation base is at the 9-Essences level. Whenever we go out in the future, we can loot anybody we want without a single hitch."

The parrot rolled its eyes. "You three-counting imbecile! How stupid can you be? Haowie's Transcended already. With that kind of backing, who needs hired muscle?! Don't you know the story of the fox who borrowed the tiger's might? Well don't you?!"

Inwardly, the parrot sighed, thinking about how lonely it was being

Transcendent in terms of wisdom.

The meat jelly gaped mutely as it was struck by the truth of the situation. All of a sudden, it realized that losing itself in the act like it had really had been a waste. It had almost gotten itself killed....

A few days later, Meng Hao led his little group to a desolate land mass within the starry sky of the Vast Expanse. It seemed completely devoid of any life, and yet, when Meng Hao sent his divine sense out, the pressure caused the land mass to tremble, and countless termites flew out.

From the very depths of the land emerged a huge termite, larger than any of the others. When it saw Meng Hao, and sensed the terrifying fluctuations emanating off of him, it trembled and bowed its head. This termite was much more straightforward than the old lizard, and immediately chose to acknowledge allegiance.

Taking the peak 9-Essences termite with him, Meng Hao traveled to another area, where there was a huge vortex. As he neared it, his eyes shone with bright light. Instantly, the vortex ceased spinning, and even began to show signs of collapse.

A cry of terror echoed out from within the vortex as a huge head flew out. Before, a vicious expression had covered the head's face, but now, it was staring at Meng Hao in astonishment.

It remembered Meng Hao from hundreds of years ago, when he had taken away its precious treasure. It had chased after him and tried to kill him, and now, here he was, returned with an aura infinitely more terrifying than before.

"Y-you...."

"Quit stammering!" the parrot barked. "Hurry up and decide, are you gonna acknowledge allegiance or not?!" The parrot looked quite sanctimonious and lofty, almost as if it were the one emanating the aura of Transcendence, and not Meng Hao....

The enormous face smiled wryly and thought back to what it had said last time about what would happen when it met Meng Hao again. It could

do nothing but look down.

“I acknowledge allegiance....”

Meng Hao nodded. “I’ve come searching for you and others like you, not to force you to acknowledge allegiance, but to put an end to the Karma from years ago. If you wish to follow me, you can do so for a thousand years.”

What he said was true. He didn’t need their fighting power. However, after reaching Transcendence, he got the feeling that he needed to unravel the Karma he had in the starry sky of the Vast Expanse. If he didn’t, it could be used against him as a weapon.

The last place he went was the world that existed inside of the enormous flower.

The flower was no longer in a state of bloom. It looked withered, and sagged in its position within the starry sky. When Meng Hao appeared next to it, he was so miniscule as to be invisible.

As soon as he appeared, though, the flower suddenly trembled. Clearly, the flower had a life force of its own, and it could sense that Meng Hao was a Transcendent cultivator.

He hovered there in front of the flower, thinking back to how helpless he had been last time he came, when he had been forced to simply wait for the flower to open. But now... his expression was calm as he said, “Bloom.”

As soon as that single word left his mouth, the flower trembled even more violently than before, and without the slightest hesitation, bloomed.

Meng Hao entered the world inside the flower. Back then, he had promised to completely seal the fire and ice within the world, to prevent the world from being destroyed.

As he flew across the lands, he looked down to find that things looked somewhat different than before. The ice mountains were melting, and much of the flames were extinguished. As for the area in the middle where the two tribes had lived, it was now losing its vitality.

From the look of things, it wouldn't be long before this entire world was unsuitable for life. Once the flower closed back up, no one but a Transcendent cultivator could enter, which meant that everyone living inside the world would die.

Meng Hao didn't attract the attention of Patriarch Icemountain and the Flamephoenix. Unless he wished it, no one in the starry sky of the Vast Expanse would notice him.

Looking down at the lands below, he waved his finger, a seemingly casual gesture that actually altered the natural and magical laws. It changed destiny.

The lands began to rumble as an invisible ripple spread out in either direction. Wherever it passed, ice mountains were frozen solid, sending coldness out in all directions that would never fade away. Everything was returned to its previous state.

On the other side, flames leapt to life, sending scorching heat out in all directions.

Chapter 1542: Demon Sovereign!

Having done that, Meng Hao looked at the lands below one more time, then made his way off. When the flower closed again, one of the ice mountains suddenly trembled and transformed into a giant. As the giant stared around in shock, a beam of light appeared off in the distance, which was none other than the Flamephoenix.

Both of them were completely astonished, and had no idea what had just occurred. Shortly before, they had been in despair, thinking that their home was doomed to be destroyed. But then, everything had been reversed. The mountains froze up again, and the flames raged hot and bright. There was even abundant spiritual energy present which hadn't been there before.

"What happened...?" asked the Flamephoenix. "Patriarch Icemountain, do you know?" However, a glance at Patriarch Icemountain's expression made it obvious that he had no idea either.

After a moment of silence, Patriarch Icemountain said, "How strange. Everything suddenly changed...."

Silence prevailed for the time it takes an incense stick to burn. Then, the Flamephoenix hesitantly looked up into the sky.

"Do you think it might have been... him? Returned?"

"Impossible!" Patriarch Icemountain replied immediately, shaking his head. But then, he hesitated. With the flower closed, no one should have been able to enter the world to interfere with the lands of ice and fire. Even if they could enter, changing the situation was impossible.

Eventually, the Flamephoenix looked thoughtfully up at the sky one more time, and then turned and left.

The Icemountain Giant looked out at the lands and sighed. "Don't tell me it was really him...."

A few more days passed, and soon the day arrived which Meng Hao had mentioned to the Paragons from the Vast Expanse School. On that day,

Planet Vast Expanse buzzed with activity. There was such a commotion that even the starry sky outside of the planet was affected.

Soon, figures appeared, flying up from Planet Vast Expanse. All of them were cultivators with extraordinary cultivation bases. Powerful ripples spread out into the starry sky as an 8-Essences Paragon flew out, leading a vast host of other cultivators off of the planet. It was none other than... the Ninth Sect!

They were gathering in preparation for Meng Hao's return!

Every Paragon, and all cultivators in the Dao Realm, Ancient Realm, and Immortal Realm appeared. There were countless numbers of them, stretching out in all directions.

They didn't fly out of their own power. Instead, they were organized in ranks on enormous, ancient trees which had been carved into semblances of ferocious beasts.

Further off in the distance were more figures. They weren't cultivators; they were other strange creatures and life forms.

These were various peoples from worlds that the Ninth Sect had subjugated over the years. Altogether, the forces of the Ninth Sect formed a huge army numbering over 10,000,000,000. They virtually blotted out the sky; there almost didn't seem to be an end to the army.

The pressure they radiated caused the mist in the starry sky to seethe and churn, almost as if it couldn't approach the cultivators. A vortex sprang up around the host, swirling around and making their aura even more shocking.

Soon, another host of cultivators flew out from Planet Vast Expanse. They were the powerful experts from the Eighth Sect. Although they couldn't match up to the Ninth Sect in terms of numbers, their power and glory shook the starry sky.

Next were the Seventh, Sixth, and Fifth Sects... all the way to the First Sect. Planet Vast Expanse was shaken in a way that it had never been throughout all history.

A few of the well-informed rogue cultivators knew a bit about what was going on, although they weren't sure of the details. However, most rogue cultivators had no idea what was happening, and gasped in shock and fear.

"Heavens! The nine great sects of the Vast Expanse School are all mobilizing off-planet! What's happening?"

"There must be a war! The Vast Expanse School is going to fight one of the other great powers!!"

"How could that be possible? There are always small wars being fought here and there in the starry sky, but the Vast Expanse School is huge. Besides, how could they go to war when their 9-Essences experts are all focused on trying to Transcend...?" It wasn't just the rogue cultivators who were shocked. All of the other worlds located in the Vast Expanse School's sphere of influence were equally astonished.

Of course, some people were able to make speculations based on tidbits of information which had leaked out in recent days.

"Did you hear? The entire Vast Expanse School is mobilizing. I heard they're all going to support their Ninth Paragon!"

"The Ninth Paragon comes from a world that the Immortal God Continent and the Devil Realm Continent destroyed. He wants revenge, and the Vast Expanse School is going to help him get it!"

"They're going to war with the Immortal God Continent and the Devil Realm Continent? How... how could this Ninth Paragon convince them to do such a thing?!"

Even as everyone reeled in shock, the 9-Essences Paragons appeared from the various sects. They flew out to the front of the huge army, where they settled down cross-legged to wait.

The Sect Leader was among their number, his expression grave and murderous as he sat there in front of the First Sect.

Jin Yunshan, Sha Jiudong, and Immortal Bai Wuchen were there as well, their energy shaking the starry sky around them.

Apparently, the entire Vast Expanse School had come out. It was a shocking event which rocked the entire starry sky of the Vast Expanse. As word spread near and far, gasps of shock could be heard everywhere.

Countless worlds chose to seal themselves shut. Innumerable vortexes went dark. No one wanted to participate in what was sure to be a brutal and savage conflict.

Time passed, and everyone waited in silence. Suddenly, a powerful roar filled the starry sky as an enormous basilisk lizard appeared. It was as large as an entire land mass, and before it even got close, an intense pressure weighed down, causing everyone to tremble. The Sect Leader's eyes snapped open, and he slowly rose to his feet.

Jin Yunshan and the others looked on with shining eyes and trembling hearts as they realized that standing on the head of the huge lizard... was Meng Hao.

The basilisk lizard filled them with intense dread, and as for the person standing on its head, it once again filled their hearts with the awesome sensation of Transcendence.

As the lizard approached, roaring sounds echoed out from behind it as an enormous termite appeared. Although it was smaller than the lizard, the aura it emanated was terrifying to the extreme.

After the termite was an enormous head, floating along with a vicious expression. It looked like the head of an old man, threatening without being angry, which emanated the fear-inspiring ripples of the peak of 9-Essences.

“Patriarch Godlizard!”

“The Holy Termite!!”

“And the Primordial Patriarch!!”

The Sect Leader and the others were completely shaken. They had heard of these three entities, and knew that they had reached the peak of 9-Essences long, long ago.

It was at this point that the 8-Essences Paragon from the Ninth Sect took a deep breath, then clasped hands and bowed deeply toward Meng Hao.

“Greetings, Demon Sovereign!”

The 10,000,000,000 Ninth Sect disciples behind him trembled inwardly. Immediately, they clasped hands and bowed, their voices forming a powerful sound wave that swept out in all directions.

“Greetings, Demon Sovereign!”

As the starry sky shook, the Sect Leader, Jin Yunshan, Sha Jiudong and Immortal Bai Wuchen, as well as all the other 9-Essences Paragons, all clasped hands and bowed deeply.

“Greetings, Demon Sovereign!” Then, all of the other disciples from all the other sects clasped hands and bowed low, their voices shaking Heaven and Earth.

The intensity of the sound echoing out caused a pulsing force of expulsion to rise up, which was the will of the starry sky reacting to what was happening.

Meng Hao looked out at the scene quietly. A moment passed, and soon silence reigned. Meng Hao suddenly flicked his sleeve, causing his cultivation base power to erupt out. Instantly, it surpassed the 9-Essences level, and radiated the fluctuations of the Daosource.

In the Daosource Realm, one became Essence, and replaced natural and magical laws. The pressure emanating from a single person could cause the minds of all living things to reel, and fill their hearts with shock.

Things weren't over yet though. After unleashing his cultivation base, Meng Hao sent his divine sense out like a hurricane that swept over the entire starry sky.

“Transcendence! That's... the aura of Transcendence!!”

“I can't believe the Ninth Paragon... actually Transcended!!”

“The legends say that there have only ever been three people who Transcended in the starry sky of the Vast Expanse. Patriarch Vast Expanse

was one of them. But now, there's actually a fourth!!" Up to this point, only the 9-Essences cultivators had been aware of Meng Hao's Transcendence. Now that Meng Hao was making no effort to conceal the level of his cultivation base, however, the 7 and 8-Essences Paragons were all completely shocked.

The Dao Sovereigns, Dao Lords, and other Dao Realm experts were all staring with wide eyes.

The Ancient Realm cultivators' eyes shone with fervor, and they began to cry out at the tops of their lungs. Even the disciples who weren't from the Ninth Sect were all in a fervor.

Of course, the Ninth Sect was Meng Hao's sect, and they were completely shaken. The sounds of their cries shook Heaven and Earth, and the cultivators from the worlds which had been subjugated over the past centuries were completely won over.

"Demon Sovereign!"

"Demon Sovereign!!"

"Demon Sovereign!!!"

Countless cries and roars erupted, starting from the Ninth Sect and going all the way to the First Sect. Everyone, every being, every life form dropped to their knees to kowtow!

Even the 9-Essences Paragons did the same thing. The passions of the crowd surged. The termite and the huge head looked at him with expressions of deference and allegiance, and the old lizard trembled.

To everyone and everything present, Meng Hao was the ultimate figure of respect.

All Heaven and Earth existed for him!

He stood there, energy surging out into the starry sky, and after a long moment passed, he spoke, and his words were like magical law that rocked the Heavens.

"Many thanks, ladies and gentlemen. Now, I would like to ask for your

assistance. Please join me... as I return to my home, the world sealed by the 33 Heavens, the Mountain and Sea Butterfly!”

Chapter 1543: Target: 33 Heavens!

Meng Hao's voice echoed out into the ears of all of the cultivators, causing their eyes to burn red with passion and reverence.

“Heed the commands of the Demon Sovereign!”

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE! The starry sky was split open, and the mist of the Vast Expanse was sent surging away. The countless life forms that existed within the mist began to tremble, and didn't dare to reveal even a scrap of their auras.

Meng Hao waved his sleeve, and the massive army began to sweep through the starry sky in the direction of the Mountain and Sea Butterfly.

The mist was dispelled. Countless worlds were sealed, and countless vortexes remained dim. Even the will of the starry sky of the Vast Expanse didn't dare to approach. A vast array of cultivators marched through the starry sky like a river, splitting apart the Vast Expanse and causing rumbling sounds to echo out in all directions.

The First Sect was in the vanguard position, and was flanked by the Second and Third Sects. They were like sharp blades piercing everything in their path as they whistled through the starry sky.

In the middle of the procession was the Ninth Sect. Countless cultivators surrounded the huge old lizard, upon whose head Meng Hao sat cross-legged.

The termite and the huge head were off to either side, radiating the energy of the 9-Essences level, causing the starry sky to grow dim.

Flanking the Ninth Sect were the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Sects, which were like wings that spread out in all directions.

The rear guard was comprised of the Seventh and Eighth Sects, like a mighty tail radiating a murderous aura.

The mighty army seemed prepared to cut down any Gods it encountered, to slay any Immortals. It rocketed away from Planet Vast Expanse, unleashing its top speed as it headed toward the Mountain and Sea

Butterfly.

As they went along, countless worlds made way. Innumerable vortexes remained in concealment. Any such place which dared to stand in the path of this army would be crushed in the blink of an eye, as easily as dry twigs.

Meng Hao never reigned in his aura. From beginning to end, it raged out, announcing in grand and domineering fashion to all vortexes, to all lives, to all entities, that he was returning.

The Demon Sovereign was back!

At the same time, as the army swept along, more and more entities sensed what was happening. Trembling with disbelief, they started spreading the news even faster through the starry sky of the Vast Expanse.

“A Transcendent cultivator has appeared!!”

“A fourth Transcendor has appeared in the starry sky of the Vast Expanse!”

“Earlier, it suddenly felt as if another Heaven had been added above us. The truth is... that a fourth Transcendor appeared!”

The starry sky was completely shaken. Not even dust dared to get in Meng Hao’s path. Countless beings off in the distance couldn’t hold back from dropping to their knees to kowtow.

Every cultivator in the army was itching to fight, causing the deadly aura of the army to rise higher by the moment.

As the army advanced, it got closer and closer to the Mountain and Sea Butterfly.

Meng Hao sat atop the old lizard’s head, looking off into the distance at the butterfly, and it was impossible for him to remain calm. He had Transcended, and had thus surpassed all other cultivators. He had reached a legendary Realm, and was now the type of person that others worshipped. But despite that, he still couldn’t remain calm.

“I’m coming home,” he thought.

“Dad. Mom. Your son is coming back to see you.... Your son is coming home....

“Qing’er, I’m returning for you....

“How have you been, my family, my friends...? Do you remember me? I am Meng Hao... and I’m back!

“Oh Mountain and Sea Realm, you were destroyed in the past, and I promised to build you once again. Now, I’ve come back to make good on that promise!

“And as for you, 33 Heavens... all grievances will be laid to rest!

“Immortal God Continent, Devil Realm Continent. I now understand much more about you, and ninety percent of my speculations have been confirmed. However... I will still destroy you!

“If I don’t, then what is the point of having Transcended? You will be eradicated. Who could possibly just forget... an enmity which has festered for two thousand years?!

“As for the starry sky of the Vast Expanse, it will also be overturned!” His eyes shone with crimson light, Demonic light, and the Demonic qi which radiated off of him exceeded anything ordinary!

Numerous images flashed through Meng Hao’s mind. He saw the Mountain and Sea Realm being destroyed in the fighting. He saw the Immortal God Continent giving chase. He saw the deaths of Shui Dongliu and Sea Dream. After the Mountain and Sea Butterfly was safe, he saw the Devil Realm Continent arrive, joining forces with the Immortal God continent to destroy the Mountain and Sea Realm.

The meat jelly died, and the parrot experienced an agonizing fate, all to help him flee. After he awoke near Planet Vast Expanse, he had set a goal!

“One day, I will return!”

RUMBLE!

The starry sky shook as the army advanced. The mists retreated. Eventually, something appeared in front of them. It was a grand and

shocking spell formation. It was... the Aeon Span!

Within the Aeon Span were the thirty-three land masses, the 33 Heavens which suppressed the Mountain and Sea Butterfly. Just outside of the 33 land masses was a monkey, sitting there cross-legged in meditation. Suddenly, his eyes opened, and he shivered in terror and shock. All of the fur on his body instantly stood on end.

Beneath it all was a green bronze coffin!

The coffin glowed with soft light, and inside was a spectacularly beautiful woman who appeared to be sleeping. A butterfly could be seen atop the coffin, which seemed to be nearing the end of its life.

Pressure crushed down from above, but the light from the coffin made it impossible for that pressure to touch the butterfly. It was almost as if the entire starry sky hated the butterfly; were it not for the light from that coffin, the butterfly would have long since been destroyed.

Years ago, Paragon Sea Dream had given up her life to find a safe haven. The fact that the butterfly had survived until now proved that her sacrifice really had bought safety for the Mountain and Sea Realm!

"I'm back!" Meng Hao whispered, standing on the head of the old lizard, looking at the Mountain and Sea Butterfly.

His words were spoken so softly that only he could hear them. As he looked at the Mountain and Sea Butterfly, his eyes shone with reminiscence.

Now that he had Transcended, his slightest word or action could shake the entire starry sky of the Vast Expanse. In fact, he didn't even need to speak. A single thought could change natural law.

He had even reached the point where all someone had to do was think of his name, and Meng Hao would know. That level of divine ability and skill was one of the terrifying natures of Transcendent cultivators.

It was nothing special to the so-called Boundless Dao and Heaven Trampling.

In the moment that he murmured those words, his voice could be heard in the minds of all his old friends in the Mountain and Sea Butterfly.

His parents were there. They suddenly looked up as they sensed Meng Hao's aura, and expressions of excitement appeared on their faces. Although it was clearly their son's aura, it contained something that could shake Heaven and Earth. And it was getting closer!

"It's Hao'er!"

"Hao'er is back! He didn't die! The qilin son of the Fang Clan is back! He's definitely going to cleave open the 33 Heavens and paint the Vast Expanse red with their blood!" Meng Hao's father, Fang Xiufeng, threw his head back and laughed. It had been a long time since he had been so happy and excited. He wrapped his arms around Meng Li, whose eyes were wet with tears.

She looked up into starry sky above, and she knew that her son was the most outstanding individual in existence. She knew that he would keep his promises no matter how much time passed or how many incredible developments occurred.

Years ago he had said that he would return, so... he would definitely return!

Many people throughout the world of the Mountain and Sea Butterfly felt similar sensations. Xu Qing was sitting cross-legged in the main gate of her residence on the mountaintop. She suddenly walked outside, her green garments fluttering in the wind. Her long hair flowed past her beautiful face, which was already starting to show a bit of age.

However, the faint wrinkles couldn't cover up her expression of determination and excitement.

She had been meditating moments ago, but when she heard Meng Hao's voice, it was almost as if he were standing right next to her. I'm back....

She was sure that she hadn't misheard. After rushing out, she stood there at the top of the mountain, looking up anxiously into the sky. She gripped her garment tightly with both hands, tears streaming down her

face. Those tears contained joy, and her longing for Meng Hao, feelings which had been growing for two thousand years.

“Meng Hao...” she said, smiling. Her smile was as beautiful as a blooming flower, causing everything around her to somehow fade. She knew... that Meng Hao was back. Her husband was out there in the starry sky above.

He was back, just as he had promised!

Chapter 1544: Excited and Trembling!

Within the world of the Mountain and Sea Butterfly, Wang Youcai was practicing cultivation in a desert. He had spent the last two thousand years tormenting himself. Tormenting his fleshly body, his divine sense, his mind. By means of this brutal method of training, he had constantly increased his battle prowess.

He had come to be an object of veneration for countless people in the Mountain and Sea Butterfly. Normally speaking, he should never have been able to live so long. In fact, there were many powerful experts in the Mountain and Sea Butterfly whose longevity should have been cut off long ago.

However, the bronze coffin that the butterfly rested on emanated intense Time power to prevent the 33 Heavens from encroaching. That power nourished and protected those who inhabited the world of the Mountains and Seas, even those who should have died in the past.

Wang Youcai's eyes were black pits that he hadn't opened for countless years. Currently, he was trudging along through the desert, when suddenly, he stopped and looked up. Then he started laughing uproariously. Boundless cultivation base power erupted out of him, causing a tempest to spring up.

"That aura. That voice... Meng Hao! It's Meng Hao!" Wang Youcai once again laughed heartily.

In another part of the Mountain and Sea Butterfly world was a flourishing sect. Fatty was there. He was now a middle-aged man, so fat that he looked like a mountain. However, he emanated the powerful fluctuations of the Dao Realm. Although he couldn't measure up to Wang Youcai, he was still one of the most famous experts in the Mountain and Sea Butterfly world. Considering everything he had experienced in the past, the words he spoke in the sect were like orders from the Heavens.

He was currently crunching a spirit stone to bits in his mouth, which was his special method of cultivation, something different from others.

Even as he absorbed the spirit stone, he suddenly shivered as a sensation overcame him which had experienced in the past. This time, however, it was vastly more intense. He suddenly turned into a blur of motion as he flew up into the sky.

He looked up, trembling, then let out a powerful, excited roar. After being stifled for so many years, he was at long last able to explode with madness.

All of the disciples in the sect were completely shocked. The sect Elders flew up into the air, to look in astonishment at Fatty, their Patriarch.

“Hahaha! Meng Hao, dammit! You’re finally back!

“I heard you! I heard you, Meng Hao!” Fatty roared with joy, tears streaming down his face.

“More than two thousand years. We’ve been waiting for you for more than two thousand years. At long last... you’re back!”

People down below looked up at their Patriarch, who was laughing and crying, and weren’t sure what was happening. Most of them had been born in the recent centuries, and thus couldn’t hear or sense what Meng Hao’s old friends could.

A moment later, a few hundred old-timers flew up from within the sect. They were trembling, unsure if what they had sensed moments ago had been an illusion or not. But seeing Fatty react in such a way caused excitement to rise up in their hearts.

“Was that really... Meng Hao?!?!?”

“It really was! Hahaha! He’s coming back?!?!?”

“It was Meng Hao. It was him! The Demon Sovereign!!” All of the old-timers began to shout in excitement. As for everyone else, their confusion gradually gave way to shock.

“Meng Hao? The exalted Demon Sovereign? According to the stories, he was the number one most powerful expert in the Mountain and Sea Realm who saved us all two thousand years ago!”

“The exalted Demon Sovereign is back? Is... is it for real?!” One disciple after another began to tremble and cry out.

In another location was a husband and wife, who were none other than Meng Hao’s sister Fang Yu, and Sun Hai. They flew out from their residence to hover in midair, looking excitedly up into the sky.

Fang Yu’s tears of joy blurred her vision as she said, “Little brother....”

Sun Hai looked very excited, and started laughing out loud. Their reaction caused three beams of light to fly up and join them. There were two men and a woman, all of them young. These three were none other than Fang Yu and Sun Hai’s children.

These three younger ones rarely saw their parents acting so emotionally, and couldn’t help but ask what was happening.

“Dad, mom, what’s going on?”

“What happened?”

“It’s your uncle,” Fang Yu cried. “He’s back!” Her eyes were shining more brightly right now than they had for centuries.

“Our uncle? Meng Hao?”

“The exalted Demon Sovereign!?!?”

Meng Hao’s nephews and niece almost couldn’t believe what was happening. They had been born into an era in which Meng Hao was a legend. In fact, to everyone born in the past several centuries, Meng Hao wasn’t even a cultivator. He was a story, a myth.

Somewhere else in the world of the Mountain and Sea Butterfly, the aura of a 7-Essences Paragon suddenly exploded out, leading to widespread shock. Suddenly, an old man appeared up in midair.

It was none other than... Grandpa Meng!

He had already elevated his cultivation base to the level of a 7-Essences Paragon, becoming one of the four grand guardians of the Mountain and Sea Butterfly.

He looked up into the sky, then threw his head back and laughed uproariously, tears of joy streaming down his face.

In another area was yet another 7-Essences aura. Rumbling sounds echoed out from a puppet which stood tall over a certain city. That puppet was none other than the Paragon from the 1st Heaven, who Meng Hao had sealed early in the Mountain and Sea War.

At the same time, far to the east, was an unearthly region in which countless dead souls flew to and fro. This was the Mountain and Sea Butterfly's underworld, where reincarnation was governed. Shockingly, the aura of an 8-Essences Paragon emanated out from here. It was none other than... Ksitigarbha!

In the past, he had been the most powerful of the Mountain and Sea Lords!

In the far west was a boundless sea. Suddenly, a massive wave exploded up, atop which stood a young man. Gradually, an enormous whale became visible beneath him. The whale seemed to be a creature of constant transformations, with its appearance randomly changing. It was none other than true spirit Night!

That young man was the one and only... Ke Jiusi! Shockingly, he was emanating the fluctuations of the 8-Essences level!

During the past two thousand years, many shocking developments had occurred within the Mountain and Sea Butterfly. However, the most astonishing of all was that, in addition to the puppet, there were three additional Paragons.

Grandpa Meng and Ksitigarbha had been powerful to begin with, especially Ksitigarbha, who had been like an Imperial Lord. Therefore, it was no surprise that they had become Paragons. As for Ke Jiusi, before the fall of the Mountain and Sea Realm, few people had known who he was. Who would ever have thought that in the centuries that followed, he would rise to the 8-Essences level?

As of this moment, all four of the Paragons were looking up into the sky, as if they could see Meng Hao approaching from beyond the 33 Heavens.

In another location in the Mountain and Sea Butterfly world's sea, a huge island could be seen. A glittering shield covered it, but it was still possible to see an entire country on that island, almost a world of its own.

Shockingly, a huge turtle lay beneath that island. It was... Patriarch Reliance! Yawning, he squinted and looked up into the Heavens.

"Why is that aura so familiar?" he muttered to himself. "Dammit. Think hard, Patriarch. Whose aura is that? How come it makes me... want to cry?" A young woman could be seen standing on his head. She was currently weeping with joy.

That young woman was none other than Guyiding Tri-Rain!

Behind her was a man who, despite seeming to be of middle age, had a full head of white hair. His aura was in a state of deterioration, and yet, a pearl circulated around him in the air.

He was... Dong Hu!

"I've been feeding this pearl with my body for so many years," he murmured, "waiting for its owner. Considering everything, I can't help but wonder if it belongs to Meng Hao." His eyes shone with brilliant light.

Countless people were shocked and astonished. The world of the Mountain and Sea Butterfly was shaken in a way it never had been before. It was as if, all of a sudden, new life had been poured into it.

All of Meng Hao's old friends were whipped into excitement, including Li Ling'er, who was carrying on Sea Dream's legacy, and Zhixiang. There were other cultivators too, all of whom were extremely excited.

"He's coming back...."

"Meng Hao is back!!"

"The Demon Sovereign is back!" Everyone was excited and shouting. The moment they had all been waiting for... was finally here!

At the same time, powerful ripples emanated out from the huge army. Their speed increased, sending the mist of the Vast Expanse into chaos.

The Outsiders who lived in the 33 Heavens didn't seem to notice. They

didn't know what was coming, and apparently, didn't even care.

The Aeon Span, as well as other defensive spell formations put in place by the Immortal God Continent and the Devil Realm Continent, had rebuffed countless greedy beings who had attempted to break in during the past two thousand years.

All had been blocked, and many had been directly killed.

What made the 33 Heavens even more complacent was that inside the Aeon Span, there was... Dao Fang. He was their guardian, and thanks to the help of the Immortal God Continent and the Devil Realm Continent, his cultivation base was even higher than it had been in the past.

And yet, the person they had all put their faith in, Dao Fang, was currently trembling.

Chapter 1545: Dao Fang, Do You Remember Me?!

Dao Fang's fur stood on end as a sensation of unprecedented crisis raged through him. It was the most intense sensation of danger that he had experienced since the two times the Mountain and Sea Realm had been destroyed.

He almost felt as if he couldn't breathe, and his cultivation base was trembling. He saw the army approaching, the terrifyingly endless number of cultivators. Furthermore, he could sense that there were numerous terrifying individuals within the larger army as a whole.

He couldn't see Meng Hao, only the huge old lizard. It was as if he didn't even qualify to see the figure who stood atop the lizard's head. Instead, all he could see in the place that Meng Hao was standing was a swirling vortex, a vortex that could seemingly distort the entire starry sky.

Dao Fang didn't hesitate for even a moment. There was no time for him to even cry out. He quickly performed an incantation gesture then pointed out, causing the Aeon Span to begin to rumble. Powerful ripples exploded out as the Aeon Span manipulated the mist of the Vast Expanse into creating a huge barrier that prevented the approaching army from even seeing inside of it. Dao Fang then performed another incantation gesture, causing two additional auras to emanate out from the spell formation.

Of those two auras, one represented the Immortal God Continent, and the other represented the Devil Realm Continent. They merged into the mist around them, spreading out in all directions, serving as a sign, and a warning.

They were a sign of the power of the Immortal God Continent and the Devil Realm Continent, and also a warning to all that this place was not to be provoked.

Having accomplished these things, Dao Fang breathed a sigh of relief. He was still a bit nervous, but kept reminding himself of all the other

terrifying entities he had encountered in his long life who were scared off by these two auras.

He could only hope that this situation would be the same.

“They’re probably just passing by,” he told himself. “Yes... definitely just passing by.

“That’s most certainly it. The 33 Heavens couldn’t have done anything to provoke such a huge army of cultivators. And none of the survivors of the Mountain and Sea Realm have been able to break free from the seal. There’s no way they could have somehow made contact with such a terrifyingly powerful group.

“That must be the case.... Besides, who in the starry sky of the Vast Expanse would ever dare to provoke the Immortal God Continent and the Devil Realm Continent? Such people are like phoenix feathers or qilin horns, and would never care about a place like this.” As he comforted himself in this way, he slowly began to calm down, convinced that his analysis of the situation was correct.

And yet, he couldn’t shake the jittery fear which gripped him because of the mysterious figure in the vortex on top of the lizard, that figure who he couldn’t actually see. He had the feeling that whoever was in that vortex was the most terrifying entity in the entire huge army.

He was so nervous as he sat there waiting that he didn’t even notice that he had begun to tremble visibly. With the help of the Immortal God Continent and the Devil Realm, his cultivation base was now in the 9-Essences level. And yet, he was shaking all the same.

Fear swept over him like flood waters, leaving him feeling as if he were being suffocated.

He could only wait and hope that the army would simply pass by.

Outside of the Aeon Span, the mist shield. As the seal over the 33 Heavens tightened, Meng Hao’s view was once again obscured.

The army slowed to halt. Countless cultivators hovered there, eyes gleaming with the desire to unleash slaughter, as well as utter confidence

in Meng Hao. One by one, they turned, gazing at him with zealous ardor. Everything was quiet. Not a single person spoke. All of them were simply waiting for Meng Hao to issue orders.

The disciples of the Ninth Sect did so, as did the cultivators from all the other sects. Even the 9-Essences Paragons were no exception. The Sect Leader, Jin Yunshan, the huge termite and the gigantic head, the old lizard, and all of Meng Hao's other subordinates were completely silent.

Meng Hao stood there on the lizard, looking out at the mists, his eyes flickering with killing intent so powerful it seemed capable of taking corporeal form. Then, the mist shield seethed as the two auras erupted out from the Aeon Span.

Both of them were at the peak of 9-Essences. They weren't people; they were simply streams of divine will left behind to threaten anyone who came into the area.

"This area is under the protection of the brave warriors of the Immortal God Continent. Anyone from other parts of the starry sky of the Vast Expanse should leave immediately!"

At the same time, another voice also rang out, sinister and murderous and also rife with an aura of death.

"Whoever encroaches upon the territory of the Devil Realm will have their entire clan wiped out. Not a single individual will be left alive!"

Any other person would have been struck with fear. In fact, without Meng Hao, even the Vast Expanse School would have shrunk back. Facing either the Immortal God Continent or the Devil Realm would lead to a catastrophe that the Vast Expanse School would never accept.

But now, everything was different. Even as the messages from the two streams of divine will echoed out, none of the cultivators in the army moved a muscle. In fact, their murderous auras only grew stronger.

As everyone watched, Meng Hao slowly rose to his feet, and then waved his finger at the mist shield.

He didn't speak a word. The simple movement of his finger didn't even

unleash a magical technique. And yet, the mist shield began to vibrate, and the two streams of peak 9-Essences divine will were instantly destroyed.

At the same time, countless Heaven-shaking, Earth-shattering roars echoed out from within the army. Their killing intent rocketed up, and in the blink of an eye, vast quantities of cultivators shot out toward the mist shield.

The Sect Leader and the others, numerous peak 9-Essences cultivators, all unleashed divine abilities at the same time. The mist instantly began to collapse.

Beneath the mist shield, inside the Aeon Span, Dao Fang was getting even more nervous. He could see the mist outside being attacked in unprecedented fashion, and could also sense the two sealing marks left by the Immortal God Continent and the Devil Realm suddenly cracking and then transforming into ash.

They were destroyed in an instant, as if they were insignificant. Even more shocking was that as they were transformed into ash, two black threads shot through the mist shield, looking for the source of the sealing marks, as if to obliterate whoever had controlled them.

Dao Fang was completely stunned. Gasping, he shot to his feet. At the same time, the mist shield outside of the Aeon Span was being ripped away as if by enormous hands. Massive booms echoed out, and the starry sky shook. It only took a few moments... for the mist to be completely ripped open!

It was torn apart from either side, revealing the Aeon Span, the 33 Heavens, and even Dao Fang, who by now was trembling in fear.

Rumbling sounds filled the starry sky as the army advanced. As divine abilities shot out and slammed into the Aeon Span, the intense sound of explosions echoed out, startling numerous Outsiders down in the 33 Heavens, none of whom could imagine what was happening.

The Aeon Span was a shield that could not be easily broken through. Even Shui Dongliu had plotted and calculated for years and years before

figuring out a way to do so. Besides, the shield had been bolstered and strengthened for a thousand years. The Immortal God Continent and the Devil Realm had paid significant prices to ensure that it was stable.

But now, it only took a moment for cracks to spread out over its surface. Countless figures appeared outside, all of them unleashing relentless attacks that pushed the Aeon Span to its breaking point.

Among those figures were a golden-robed young man, an old man with white hair, a man surrounded by a windstorm, and a woman whose spectacular beauty was visible despite the mist which surrounded her.

“9-Essences... the great circle of 9-Essences!” Dao Fang was flabbergasted. All four of those people were at the great circle of 9-Essences, and any one of them could shake heavenly bodies with the tap of a foot. And these four were apparently only the vanguard!

They were joined by more than ten other cultivators, all of whom were attacking, not just with the power of 9-Essences, but rather, the peak!

“Peak... 9-Essences!” Dao Fang’s mind was spinning. He had never seen so many 9-Essences cultivators together, and couldn’t imagine how it would be possible for them to all be acting in concert. Furthermore, these people were mere soldiers; none of them were the general who commanded the army!

More terrifying than them was the old lizard a bit further off, who looked like a world unto itself. Next to the lizard was a terrifying head, and in the other direction was a huge termite whose eyes radiated merciless light.

Those three left Dao Fang feeling as if all the light had faded from the world. Despair filled his heart as he confirmed that those three were past the great circle of 9-Essences, and were borderline Transcendent.

“There’s a misunderstanding here!” he shrieked. “Fellow Daoists, we are the 33 Heavens! We don’t get involved with the enmities of the outside world. We’ve never offended anyone, and in fact, we’ve never even left our spell formation. Please, tell me what’s going on!!

“We are a subordinate world of the Immortal God Continent and the Devil Realm. Fellow Daoist, please, tell me why this is happening!” More figures were flying out from the 33 Heavens, and all of them were trembling in fear.

Dao Fang’s cries were filled with confusion and fury. He couldn’t help but feel that it was unfair for this to be happening, considering they hadn’t offended anyone this powerful.

It was at this point that a cool voice suddenly echoed out through the starry sky.

“Dao Fang. Dao Fang who destroyed the Eighth Mountain with a single staff strike.... Do you remember me?”

*

Note from Deathblade: When RWX and I went to meet with Er Gen recently, Er Gen mentioned that Dao Fang started out as the monkey friend of Su Ming, the MC of the book Beseech the Devil. If/when that book gets a good translation team keep an eye out for Dao Fang!

Chapter 1546: Destroying the Aeon Span!

There was nothing awe-inspiring about what he said. In fact, his words seemed laced with sorrow. And yet, within the sorrow, Dao Fang could also hear hatred, a hatred that would not dissipate even if the 33 Heavens were destroyed. It was the type of hatred that could spawn killing intent so powerful that it would not be sated even if the starry sky were overthrown, or the Vast Expanse destroyed and filled with the reek of blood!

As soon as he heard those words, his jaw dropped, and he subconsciously looked up toward the huge lizard outside of the Aeon Span, and the mysterious figure in the vortex on its head.

Slowly, that figure began to grow clearer and clearer. Dao Fang began to pant, and his eyes went wide with disbelief. Soon... he could clearly see the figure's face in every detail.

Dao Fang began to tremble, and his mind felt as if it were being filled with countless lightning bolts and thunderclaps. He simply couldn't believe what he was seeing. It was so preposterous that he couldn't help but rub his eyes to clear them.

"Hahaha, how could it be him?" he muttered to himself, shivering. "I must be seeing things.... Ha ha...." After rubbing his eyes he looked over again, and his face drained of blood. All he could do was gape in shock, his mind devoid of thought, a complete blank.

He couldn't prevent himself from shaking visibly, and his eyes were instantly shot with blood. He felt like his blood was about to pump in reverse; his tongue stuck in his mouth, and his mouth opened and closed as if he were speaking, and yet, no words came out.

"What? Don't recognize me?" Meng Hao asked coolly. He began to walk forward, and the old lizard immediately lowered its head to accommodate him. As he strode out, all of the surrounding cultivators dropped to their knees, expressions of ardor on their faces. Even the parts of the army which were attacking the Aeon Span stopped and dropped to their knees.

Countless voices joined together to form a sound that could shake

Heaven and Earth. "Greetings, Demon Sovereign!"

The mere sound of it caused the Aeon Span to shake.

Meng Hao walked forward, his expression the same as ever. Soon he was standing right in front of the Aeon Span. There he hovered, looking at the incredulous Dao Fang on the other side.

"M-Meng... M-Meng Hao...." Dao Fang stammered, seemingly having difficulty even speaking. From the look in his eyes, it was as if he were being faced with the most spectacularly unbelievable thing in all existence. He could scarcely believe his own eyes, or his own mind. Even just looking at Meng Hao left him feeling like his body was about to collapse, and he began to edge backward.

"Impossible!" he shrieked, shaking even harder than before. "It's not possible that you're Meng Hao. Meng Hao is dead. Dead, I tell you! Who are you? Why are you disguised as Meng Hao? There's no way you're actually Meng Hao!"

"Did you personally witness my death?" Meng Hao asked. He was in no hurry, and everything in the area was under the control of his divine sense. It was possible to say that no force or power who came here could threaten or harm the Mountain and Sea Butterfly.

Not the Immortal God Continent. Not the Devil Realm. And of course, the 33 Heavens qualified even less.

Meng Hao's hatred had been festering for more than two thousand years. If one started counting from the moment of the 33 Heavens' betrayal, when they began to suppress the Mountain and Sea Realm, then the hatred of the cultivators of the Mountain and Sea Realm stretched back even farther than that.

Because of such hatred, Meng Hao wouldn't simply destroy the 33 Heavens in one fell swoop. That would not drive away the hatred. He would torment them; he would unleash the hatred upon them. Only in such a way could he, as well as the other cultivators of the Mountain and Sea Realm, give vent to the resentment which had been suffocating them for years!

“I... I....” Dao Fang was nearly struck mute by Meng Hao’s words. It was true. He hadn’t personally witnessed Meng Hao die. Although it didn’t seem possible that Meng Hao could have made a comeback, within Dao Fang’s terror, he had to admit that the person in front of him... was definitely Meng Hao!

“How can he be so powerful?” Dao Fang said bitterly. “And how could he be back...?”

As his voice echoed out beneath the Aeon Span, the other cultivators of the 33 Heavens heard it, including the powerful experts who had just flown up. Among their number were Paragons who had interacted with Meng Hao in the past, and when they heard Dao Fang’s words, their faces turned ashen, and their minds reeled.

Having seen the army outside of the Aeon Span, they were already terrified and filled with anxiety. Facing such a huge army left them completely at wits’ end, and they could only be as careful as possible. Even if they had to beg and plead for mercy, they would.

For the 33 Heavens to be faced with an army like this was like a tiny kingdom facing an empire. There was simply no way to compare!

It was like a baby fighting a strong young man.

After seeing Meng Hao with their own eyes, and hearing Dao Fang’s words, the powerful experts from the 33 Heavens began to shake in disbelief.

“M-Meng... Meng Hao!!”

“He’s that Paragon from the Mountain and Sea Realm!!”

The experts from the 33 Heavens were in a pandemonium, especially the ones who had personally witnessed Meng Hao in action before. It was as if a huge disaster were bearing down on them from above. However, there were still some who didn’t understand the height of the Heavens and the breadth of the Earth, and were still confident enough to make brazen statements.

“Impossible! It’s impossible! He’s dead. And even if he didn’t die back

then, the Immortal God Continent and the Devil Realm Continent have been searching for him ever since. There's no way he could still be alive! And even if he were alive, how could he possibly have command of such a powerful force!?"

"How could he ever have convinced such a huge army to fight for him? This is ludicrous!!"

"Well he won't be able to get past the Aeon Span. It was bolstered by the Immortal God Continent and the Devil Realm. It will take him a while to get through, and by that time, the Immortal God Continent and the Devil Realm will have arrived. This Meng Hao has walked right into a trap. He's dead!"

Meng Hao hovered outside of the Aeon Span, looking at the Outsiders, eyes flickering with killing intent and hatred, which he did nothing at all to hide.

"The Aeon Span...." he said. A vicious smile broke out on his face, and he began to laugh, a laughter filled with hatred. The Aeon Span had sealed the Mountain and Sea Realm for countless years. Shui Dongliu had spent his entire life planning how to break through it and buy a chance at freedom for the Mountain and Sea Realm.

In fact, it was because of that shield, which had suppressed the cultivators of the Mountain and Sea Realm for so many years, that the League of Demon Sealers' mantra also mentioned... the Aeon Span.

"They all had to face the Aeon Span...." His laughter grew louder, until it echoed out through the entire starry sky.

"I, Meng Hao, hereby decree that in this starry sky, there will henceforth be no Aeon Span!" His voice echoed out like thunder, provoking an instant reaction. The starry sky of the Vast Expanse was altered. It didn't matter whether or not the will of the starry sky agreed. Meng Hao changed it, ensuring that the Aeon Span was something that could not exist for all eternity.

He hated the Aeon Span!

Without the slightest hesitation, he extended his hand and tapped the Aeon Span!

As soon as his finger touched the shield it began to distort, and massive rumbling sounds echoed out. Apparently, natural and magical laws were being unleashed by Meng Hao. Instantly, it was as if the Aeon Span were incongruous with the entire starry sky, as if Meng Hao's will had become the will of Heaven. Natural law was changed!

RUUUUUUMMMMBLLLLLLE....

Cracks spread out from the spot where Meng Hao's finger had touched the shield. Instantly, they spread out to cover the entire Aeon Span.

In the space of a few breaths, Dao Fang and the other powerful experts of the 33 Heavens watched in shocked disbelief as the shield that was the Aeon Span... shattered!

It completely collapsed into countless pieces, destroyed as easily as a dried twig!

As the innumerable fragments of the destroyed shield swept out in all directions, it seemed like the starry sky wished to expel them. Intense pressure crushed down on them, transforming them into powder. The shield which was the entire hope of the 33 Heavens, which had protected them from countless intruders over the years, and had simultaneously suppressed the Mountain and Sea Realm, preventing any cultivators from leaving... was instantly turned into ash.

It was blasted into smithereens!

"I, Meng Hao, hereby decree that all who practice cultivation... may no longer self-detonate or kill themselves!" Eyes flickering coldly, he waved his finger, instituting a new natural law which settled down onto the 33 Heavens.

Because of that, the countless living beings within the 33 Heavens trembled, and their minds spun.

It was almost as if the will of Allheaven wasn't willing to interfere with Meng Hao's revenge.

Meng Hao's hatred of the 33 Heavens, and the words he had just spoken, revealed the signs of what was to come. And that was... a complete and utter extermination, with no survivors!

Chapter 1547: Exterminating Dao Fang!

“Exterminate them,” Meng Hao said. His voice was soft, but his eyes burned with a murderous aura. “Don’t leave a single one alive. And don’t go too quickly. Make it slow. There are thirty-three of these Heavens, we have plenty of time.

“Do not rush to destroy them in both body and soul. You can only kill them once that way. First kill their bodies, then give their souls to me.”

The calm brutality of his voice struck icy cold deep into the hearts of all the inhabitants of the 33 Heavens.

In Karma, there is always a cause and an effect. From the moment the 33 Heavens had chosen to rebel, they were doomed to experience a day like this... in which they paid back their debt to the Mountain and Sea Realm with full interest.

That day... had come!

Almost as soon as the words left Meng Hao’s mouth, the endless army of cultivators surged into the 33 Heavens. They burst with somber, murderous auras. Considering their numbers and their power, they could quickly wipe out all of the 33 Heavens, killing everyone in body and soul. But that wasn’t the outcome Meng Hao wanted.

He didn’t just want them dead, he wanted revenge. And that revenge was for the 33 Heavens to wallow long and hard in their terror before becoming nothing.

Thus, his order to the cultivators of the Vast Expanse School was to take their time in the slaughter. Kill slowly. The entire area was sealed, making it impossible for anyone else to enter. Furthermore, natural law now prohibited anyone from killing themselves or self-detonating. As such, no one could escape the punishment that had been decided upon by a Transcendent cultivator.

Meng Hao wasn’t worried about the 33 Heavens, in their madness, harming the Mountain and Sea Butterfly. He... could prevent that from

happening.

The powerful experts of the 33 Heavens who had flown out moments ago screamed and fled. They simply didn't qualify to try to fight back against the huge army of cultivators charging toward them. Trembling, they fled deeper into the 33 Heavens. Instantly, defenses of all sorts sprang up.

However, such defenses couldn't stand up to a single bombardment from the huge army of Vast Expanse School cultivators. They were destroyed instantly. The first to be targeted for destruction was the 33rd Heaven.

At the same time, Meng Hao stepped into the ruined Aeon Span, his expression the same as ever as he came to stand in front of Dao Fang. Dao Fang's face was ashen, and all his hair was standing on end. As soon as he saw Meng Hao, he began to back up.

"You were pretty cocky back when you destroyed the Eighth Mountain with a single staff strike," Meng Hao said quietly. "Where is that cockiness now?" He took a step forward, placing him directly in front of Dao Fang. His right hand shot out, and he flicked Dao Fang in the chest.

A huge boom could be heard, along with a miserable shriek from Dao Fang. Blood sprayed out of his mouth as he was sent flying backward. To Dao Fang, that flick of Meng Hao's finger was like being struck by the entire starry sky.

That single finger flick crushed his chest into mangled blood and gore, and shattered much of the rest of his body. Of course, Meng Hao had been doing his utmost to control the force of his blow. After all, a single flick of his finger could wipe out enormous heavenly bodies, much less Dao Fang.

There was no way Meng Hao would allow Dao Fang to die so easily. Not only had this monkey destroyed the Eighth Mountain back in the war, but he had also killed countless Mountain and Sea Realm cultivators. Throughout the years, the numbers who had died by his staff as he stood watch over the 33 Heavens was impossible to calculate. There were even many among those who had died who should have had a chance to

challenge the Aeon Span.

“Impossible. Impossible. What’s your cultivation base level? This is impossible!” Dao Fang coughed up some more blood. His eyes shone with madness as he glared at Meng Hao. Finally, he threw his head back and let out a bitter howl.

He was afraid. Terrified. Never in his wildest dreams could he have imagined that Meng Hao would not only return, but would have a massive army at his beck and call. If that were all there were to it, it might not be a big deal, but most shocking of all was that Meng Hao’s cultivation base had reached an unexpectedly shocking level.

Dao Fang had never met anyone who could use a single sentence to prohibit the existence of the Aeon Span, and then use a single finger to destroy it.

The truth was he had seen all of the countless powerful experts in the army who looked at Meng Hao with zeal and awe, but he simply couldn’t accept the thought of that single word....

“Transcendence....”

Meng Hao took another step forward, bringing him back in front of Dao Fang. He reached out and tapped Dao Fang’s right arm. Cracking sounds rang out as the arm shattered, and then collapsed into a haze of gore.

Dao Fang was shaking violently. He wanted to flee, but couldn’t. The pressure weighing down on him made that impossible. All he could do was glare at Meng Hao.

“Didn’t control my power well enough,” Meng Hao said, shaking his head. He reached out and pinched Dao Fang’s left hand, crushing his five fingers one by one. Shaking, Dao Fang let out a bloodcurdling scream.

After his hand was crushed into a pulp, Dao Fang could only watch in horror as Meng Hao continued to pinch his fingers up the length of his arm, crushing it bit by bit. Then came his legs. Then his torso.

All of Dao Fang’s bones were crushed, even his spine. Meng Hao smiled, a grotesque smile that made it look like he was crying. He allowed Dao

Fang to scream until his voice began to go hoarse. And yet, Meng Hao wasn't finished yet.

The cultivators from the Vast Expanse School who could see what was happening gasped. There was no need to mention the reaction from the screaming cultivators of the 33 Heavens.

Meng Hao looked over at the army from the Vast Expanse School. "Understand now?" he said. "Do it like this. Don't let them die quickly." After a moment of silence, the army shouted their response.

"The orders of the Demon Sovereign shall be heeded!"

It didn't take long before bloodcurdling screams rang up from within the 33 Heavens. All of the Outsiders from the 1st to the 33rd Heavens were trembling in terror.

"Kill me!" Dao Fang screamed. "Kill me, Meng Hao!" Meng Hao shook his head. Reaching out, he pushed his hand down onto Dao Fang's chest.

Massive power erupted into Dao Fang, causing all of the blood in his body to spray out through his fur.

His entire body was completely drenched in blood!

Dao Fang couldn't hold back his screams. He was shaking violently, his entire body twisted and distorted, filling him with pain and terror that was almost impossible to endure.

"I'm far from finished," Meng Hao said quietly. He reached out and waved his hand, causing all of Dao Fang's blood to form together in the palm of his hand in the form of a single drop.

"You dying isn't enough. Not after you've killed so many cultivators of the Mountain and Sea Realm.

"Let me explain how Meng Hao does things. A blood debt... must be paid with blood. If you kill one of my people, I'll kill ALL your people!" With that, he sent his divine will into the drop of blood.

"Let's see where exactly the people of your bloodline are...." He smiled, and when Dao Fang saw that, it was the most terrifying thing he had even

seen. Unfortunately, even he could detect the grief and bitterness within that smile, feelings which had been festering for centuries.

A look of madness appeared in Dao Fang's eyes, and he began to struggle.

"Considering how hard you're struggling, it seems there must be people you care about. People you wish to protect." Meng Hao's eyes glowed with red light, and Demonic qi swirled around him. As his divine sense entered Dao Fang's blood, he found all of the beings throughout the starry sky of the Vast Expanse who had blood compatible with Dao Fang's.

"Not many," he said softly. "A total of 375 bloodlines. Some here in the 33 Heavens, others on the outside...." With that, he clenched his fist down onto the drop of blood, destroying it. As he did, all entities of the same blood as Dao Fang, regardless of whether they were in the 33 Heavens or elsewhere in the starry sky of the Vast Expanse... all dropped dead!

Dao Fang howled like a wild animal. It was at that point that Meng Hao's hand came to rest on his head.

"It's not over yet," he said. "In addition to your bloodlines, there are also your successor disciples. Also, the person who taught you cultivation. And your other disciples.... I will take every good memory that you have, and destroy it. Just like you did to the Mountain and Sea Realm."

Dao Fang was shaking, and a pleading look appeared in his eyes. He had never imagined that the day would come in which vengeance was inflicted upon him in this way. He fully understood that he wasn't the only one that Meng Hao wished to torment in this way. Considering the orders he had given the army, to capture the souls of the inhabitants of the 33 Heavens, it was clear that he planned... to treat the entire 33 Heavens this way.

"Thinking of begging for mercy...? Do you remember how many innocent people begged for mercy back when you destroyed the Mountain and Sea Realm? Unfortunately, when you crushed the Eighth Mountain, I don't think you even noticed them." Meng Hao's hand pushed down onto Dao Fang's head, and suddenly, his memories appeared inside Meng Hao's mind. Then, Karma Threads appeared, which Meng Hao began to viciously

sever, one by one.

Dao Fang could hear someone scream with each severed Karma Thread. In the end, he was left shaking, his eyes blank as Meng Hao extracted his soul.

“Your fleshly body is destroyed,” Meng Hao murmured, “but your soul will not rest in peace.” Meng Hao waved his hand, and a sea of flames appeared up above. He threw Dao Fang’s soul into the fire, where it would burn and be tormented for all eternity. As long as Meng Hao lived, that torment would never end.

Chapter 1548: Vicious!

Meng Hao let out a long sigh as he strolled toward the 33rd Heaven. By the time he arrived, all of the Outsiders there were dead. Their fleshly bodies were destroyed all the way down to their bones. Their memories and bloodlines were destroyed, and their souls extracted.

The captured souls were then delivered to Meng Hao by the Vast Expanse School army.

He hovered in the air above the land mass itself, pouring the souls into the sea of flames, where they would suffer eternal torment.

“That went too quickly,” Meng Hao said in a soft voice. “From here on out, spend a full day wiping out each land mass.” In response to his words, the cultivators of the Vast Expanse School shivered. At this point, they fully understood the insane depth of Meng Hao’s hatred for the 33 Heavens.

With that, Meng Hao lifted his right foot and stamped it down onto the 33rd Heaven. Rumbling sounds echoed out as cracks spread out to fill the entire land mass. Then, it began to crumble. Buildings toppled. Everything was destroyed, transformed into nothing but dust. It all happened in mere moments.

The 32nd Heaven was revealed, along with the countless terrified Outsiders upon it. They began to cry out miserably as Meng Hao waved his hand, sending the army of cultivators on the offensive.

As they began their charge, Meng Hao looked down at one particular Outsider. “I remember you,” he said. “Back then, you were an Imperial Lord, and you still are now. What a pity you’ve made no progress.”

The Outsider trembled and began to back up. But then, he was dragged through the air toward Meng Hao, screaming in terror and despair.

Meng Hao grabbed him by the neck and methodically crushed his bones. His screams filled the entire 32nd Heaven as Meng Hao used a full day to destroy his fleshly body and then extract his soul. By that point, the 32nd

Heaven was completely silent.

All of the Outsiders died screaming, bubbling with resentment that rose into the air in the form of a powerful aura, which then unleashed a stifling pressure.

Meng Hao looked at their souls for a moment before gathering them up and casting them into the eternal torment of the sea of flames.

“An aura of resentment? Screw off!” Meng Hao let out a cold harrumph, the sound of which echoed like thunder through the starry sky. The aura of resentment instantly shattered and vanished into nothing. “Resentment is useless. After all, the resentment of the Mountain and Sea Realm back then exceeded this resentment exponentially.”

Killing intent flickered in his eyes as he waved his hand toward the lands below. Rumbling could be heard as the 32nd Heaven shattered, transforming into nothing but ash. The remains of the sinners were wiped away, and the 31st Heaven was revealed.

It was at this point that a voice filled with madness, grief, and fury echoed out from the 31st Heaven.

“Meng Hao, If you dare to advance another step, we’ll destroy the Mountain and Sea Butterfly!” At the same time, countless figures shot out from the 1st Heaven toward the Mountain and Sea Butterfly.

When Meng Hao saw that, he laughed. That laughter grew louder and louder, filling the starry sky. The Outsiders from the 1st Heaven who were attempting to invade the Mountain and Sea Butterfly all trembled and lurched to a halt. They had lost their ability to move, and even lost control of their cultivation bases. Looks of confusion appeared on their faces as they hovered there, motionless. At the same time, a powerful pressure began to build up around them.

Within that pressure, they could sense the flow of Time power. It wasn’t Meng Hao, but rather, a force flowing out from the nearby coffin. Apparently, only those who had its permission could enter that area!

Bloodcurdling screams rang from beneath the 1st Heaven, echoing all

the way up to the 31st Heaven. All Outsiders who heard it were left trembling and in despair.

However, none of them could self-detonate or commit suicide. They were forced to wait for their enemies to come kill them, to torment them, to extract their souls and send them into the sea of flames.

“Even if you don’t count the era of Paragon Nine Seals, just the hatred that I alone have experienced has lasted for two thousand years,” Meng Hao said. “To end it quickly would be wrong.

“Therefore, all Outsiders of the 33 Heavens will continue to pay the price for their destruction of the Mountain and Sea Realm.” Meng Hao did not feel that this punishment was excessive, or that he was being cruel. It was simply repayment for the countless dead of the Mountain and Sea Realm.

Back when the 33 Heavens invaded the Mountain and Sea Realm, they didn’t just kill the cultivators. They also massacred the mortals. They yearned for the complete and utter destruction of the Mountain and Sea Realm.

To Meng Hao, the resulting hatred meant that no amount of torment was excessive.

The army of cultivators began to spread out through the 31st Heaven to unleash destruction. A day later, they descended onto the 30th Heaven. In the following days, they slaughtered their way down to the 15th Heaven. By that time, the surviving Outsiders’ minds were overwhelmed with terror.

They pled. They wept. They begged. But Meng Hao had no pity for them. He couldn’t stop thinking about the brutality of the destruction of the Mountain and Sea Realm, and all the despair he had seen on the faces of the people he knew before they died. Back then, he had hated the fact that his cultivation base was insufficient. He had hated the brutal injustice of Heaven and Earth.

Now, he hovered in the air above the 15th Heaven, voice laced with grief as he murmured, “Listen.... Do you hear that?!

“Souls of the Mountain and Sea Realm who fell to the Outsiders... do you

hear that?!

“They are pleading, begging, weeping. What do you think? Should we forgive them?”

After a moment, he said, “I hear your response. No. We will not forgive them. Debts of blood must be repaid with blood. They yearned to destroy the people of the Mountains and Seas, so I will wipe them out completely!” He looked sad, and yet was smiling. Chuckling, he lifted his hand up, halting the advance of the army of the Vast Expanse School.

“From here on,” he said coolly, “you don’t need to do anything.” With that, he looked down toward the 15th Heaven and roared, “Hear me, ye who rebelled against the Mountains and Seas. There are three 9-Essences Paragons among your number. The three of you, get the hell out here immediately!” His voice echoed out like thunder through all of the remaining Heavens down below.

When he destroyed the Aeon Span, he could sense that the 33 Heavens were much stronger than they had been in the past. Back in the original war, they didn’t have any 9-Essences Paragons. But now they had three, or four if you counted Dao Fang.

As his voice echoed out, the fifteen land masses trembled. The three Paragons he had referred to began to shake. They hadn’t dared to try to fight Meng Hao or his army from the Vast Expanse School, and had instead fled, hoping to hold out long enough to be saved by the Immortal God Continent and the Devil Realm.

As soon as they showed their faces, they were grabbed by Meng Hao’s divine will and dragged out of the land masses.

One of them was an Outsider who looked like a middle-aged man. How could Meng Hao have forgotten this man? Back when the 33 Heavens invaded the Mountain and Sea Realm, he had been an 8-Essences Paragon. The other two were cultivators who had been subsequently groomed by the Immortal God Continent and the Devil Realm Continent. Obviously those two forces had paid a heavy price to help these Outsiders rise to the 9-Essences level.

In the past, the 33 Heavens had never had any 9-Essences cultivators. At the most, they had people who were on the verge of breaking through.

Back in those days, the power of 9-Essences cultivators like this would have been like the might of the Heavens to Meng Hao. But now, he could see that even though they were at the 9-Essences level, their ninth Essences had actually been forced upon them.

A single glance revealed that they had not used their own Dao to acquire that final Essence. In fact, even their eighth Essence was like that. All three of them combined would have been unable to defeat a true expert of the 9-Essences level.

The three of them were trembling, their faces filled with despair as they looked at Meng Hao and the huge army behind him.

One of them gritted his teeth and said, "The Immortal God Continent and the Devil Realm are coming. You're dead, Meng Hao. Dead!"

Meng Hao didn't respond. He waved his finger, and the 9-Essences cultivator in the middle of the group of three burst into flames, and began to scream miserably. The other two howled, unleashing all the power of their Essences as they tried to flee.

Meng Hao waved his right hand, causing a pitch black wind to spring up, which instantly enveloped one of the fleeing Paragons. His flesh and blood was flayed, and he screamed as he was dragged back to the other 9-Essences cultivators, whereupon he also burst into flames.

These magnificent 9-Essences cultivators were like ants to Meng Hao. Were it not for the fact that he wished to torment them, he could have killed them with a mere glance, or by merely brushing them with divine will.

"And that just leaves you," Meng Hao said. "Long time no see." The final 9-Essences expert was the middle-aged man who had once been the most powerful expert of the 33 Heavens. Now, he was trembling, and even tried to say something in his defense. Before he could, Meng Hao strode forward, grabbed the man's head, and then began to bash it against the surface of the land mass.

Boom!

Boom!

Boom!

Chapter 1549: The Lands of the Sinners Shall Not Remain!

Meng Hao didn't accompany his actions with words. He simply pounded the man's head into the ground over and over. The man screamed as his true form was gradually revealed. He had the body of a Flood Dragon, but with no tail. He almost looked like a serpent of some sort. Booms echoed out as Meng Hao used his head to batter a huge hole into the 15th land mass.

The Outsider's bones were smashed, his blood drained, his life force completely cut off. At that point, Meng Hao finally stopped. Extracting the Outsider's soul, he rose to his feet.

By now, the faces of the other Outsiders on the 15th land mass were completely ashen, and their minds were reeling. They were completely consumed by terror and hopelessness.

To them, Meng Hao was absolutely the most terrifying entity in all of the starry sky.

9-Essences Paragons were looked up to by all of the Outsiders in the 33 Heavens. And yet they had just watched one of the supreme 9-Essences Paragons, someone who wielded the might of the Heavens, tossed screaming into a sea of flames by Meng Hao. His body was burned into nothing, and his soul sank into the flames, where it would remain for all eternity.

The other Outsider in the black wind experienced incredible pain as his flesh was flayed off of his body as if by millions of blades.

The third one he grabbed by the neck and proceeded to use him to bash another hole, both in the land mass, and in the hearts of the other Outsiders.

That was especially the case because... up above, the 16th through 33rd Heavens were not visible. The only thing that could be seen was a boundless sea of flames, within which were the souls of countless dead

Outsiders, screaming in torment.

As the sound drifted down into the hearts of the Outsiders below, it became a wellspring of terror, causing the Outsiders to tremble in anxiety.

The worst off were the ones who had participated in the war with the Mountain and Sea Realm, whose fear was especially intense and deep. Many of them had seen Meng Hao before, and remembered everything which had happened back in the war, how countless cultivators of the Mountain and Sea Realm had been killed. Meng Hao had been defiled, transformed from the Immortal into the Demon. Back then, he had thrown his head back and cackled in madness. That image now superimposed with the cold, merciless person in front of them, whose eyes burned with murder.

Pleading, begging voices could be heard from the 15th Heaven, and especially from the land masses further down.

They were completely and utterly filled with fear. To Meng Hao, this was revenge. To them, it was a massacre, an extermination. There was simply no way for them to fight back against the terrifying Meng Hao and the army he had at his back.

Many of the despairing Outsiders now realized that Meng Hao's cultivation base was so powerful that he could simply wave his hand and destroy all of the 33 Heavens, and wipe the Outsiders away in body and soul.

But he didn't. He was using a much more brutal method, holding back his hand, going slowly but surely as he crushed them into powder.

It was a method that went beyond horrifying.

Meng Hao stood there silently. From the 1st Heaven all the way to the 15th, despairing voices could be heard crying out. It was something that was familiar to him. Very familiar. Back when the Mountain and Sea Realm had been destroyed, it had been just like this.

The aura of despair was the same, just like it had been for the Mountain and Sea Realm.

“Next,” he murmured, eyes flickering with killing intent, “I think I should force these Outsiders to fight to their deaths.

“The way you treated the Mountain and Sea Realm back then is how I will treat you today.

“That’s fair, isn’t it...?” When he thought back to all the people he had seen die, it almost was as if he were surrounded by countless ghosts, the ghosts of those valiant heroes of the Mountain and Sea Realm who had fallen in death.

Meng Hao laughed loudly as he stepped onto the fifteenth land mass. Just when the cultivators of the Vast Expanse School were about to follow him, he raised his hand to halt their progress.

As of this point, Meng Hao didn’t plan to let anyone else participate. His divine sense spread out to cover all of the Outsiders of the 15th Heaven, and at the same time, a second version of himself stepped off to the side. Then another, and another, as numerous clones were created.

First there were 100,000. Then 1,000,000. Then 10,000,000. Then tens of millions.... They didn’t seem to end. Every Outsider on the land mass was suddenly facing a version of Meng Hao.

Within a few breaths of time, Meng Hao’s clones filled the 15th Heaven. Then each clone reached out and grabbed an Outsider by the neck, regardless of that Outsider’s cultivation base level, regardless of how they struggled, regardless of how they evaded.

The Outsiders begged for mercy and howled in despair and madness. To anyone who could hear it, it would sound like hell. But to Meng Hao, it was the sound of revenge.

“I hate the 33 Heavens. I hate these lands, and I hate everyone who lives in them!” Meng Hao closed his eyes as his clones suddenly clenched their hands down.

Silence ensued. The clones didn’t crush the necks of the Outsiders. They held them high up in the air, and poured cultivation base power into them, to wreak havoc inside their bodies.

The Outsiders trembled, but because their throats were being squeezed shut, they couldn't scream. Their bodies twisted as they tried to struggle, but they fundamentally didn't even qualify to struggle.

Up above, gasps could be heard from within the army from the Vast Expanse School. From Meng Hao's methods, they could sense that his hatred for the 33 Heavens had reached an indescribable level, a level which left them completely flabbergasted.

There was no way for them to truly understand. They had not participated in the brutal and shocking war in the Mountain and Sea Realm. They had not watched the Mountains crumble, and the starry sky shatter.

They had not watched the people of the numerous mortal worlds wiped out by the Outsiders. Men. Women. Old. Young. All of them had been slaughtered mercilessly.

Meng Hao couldn't forget what he had seen back then, and couldn't forget what had happened to the mortals during that war of genocide. The mortals were part of the Mountain and Sea Realm too, and he could remember all of their corpses. Even the pregnant women, and the babies. Endless numbers of them.

Even more revolting was how he had seen people being eaten alive by the Outsiders.

"Even if I did worse to these brutes, it would still be showing mercy." Meng Hao never opened his eyes. His clones began to crush the Outsiders, until flowers of blood bloomed throughout the 15th Heaven.

All of the Outsiders were killed. Their bodies were destroyed, and their souls were swept up by Meng Hao before they could dissipate.

The souls were then cast into the sea of flames, where their screams echoed out into Heaven and Earth.

Countless souls filled that sea of flames, all of them burning and in agony. What they were experiencing now was something the likes of which they had never experienced in their entire lives.

“The lands of the sinners shall not remain,” Meng Hao said, opening his eyes. In that moment, all of his clones on the fifteen land mass vanished.

Finally, he stamped his foot down.

A boom echoed out as the entire land mass collapsed, transforming into ash and rubble which rained down onto the 14th Heaven.

Down below, buildings were destroyed, and craters opened up. The lands of the 14th Heaven shook, and screams echoed up from the Outsiders. They seemed to be completely despairing, descending into madness as they flew up, ready to fight, glaring at Meng Hao with killing intent.

The Outsiders from the 14th Heaven were in such a state of despair, their minds in such chaos from the intense pressure, that they automatically spoke out their true feelings.

“I only killed a few of the scumbags from the Mountain and Sea Realm that year. If there’s a next life after this one, I’ll definitely kill even more!”

“Hahaha! When I fought in the war against the Mountain and Sea Realm, I crushed dozens of cultivators, and even slaughtered an entire mortal kingdom. I also managed to consume a lot of their hearts. Now that I think about it, the flavor was wonderful!”

“The female cultivators from the Mountain and Sea Realm make excellent cultivation vessels, and they taste delicious too! I brought quite a few home with me after the war to be slaves. It’s too bad they were so weak, and ended up dying from it all.”

When Meng Hao heard their words, his eyes turned cold, and his murderous aura raged.

He didn’t speak. Instead, he simply waved his finger at the incoming figures.

Chapter 1550: Death Cannot Wipe Out Your Crimes!

The wave of Meng Hao's finger caused a tremor to run through the Outsiders of the 14th Heaven. A ripple spread out from his hand, almost instantly reaching the fastest among the group of Outsiders.

In that instant, they began to tremble, and then suddenly, their flesh and blood was shredded off of them. A moment later, the ripple had passed by, and they were skeletons.

The pain of having their flesh and blood flayed off of them caused the Outsiders to scream, but as their flesh and blood vanished, their ability to emit sound went with it. Soon, all they could do was experience the pain within their souls.

Meng Hao calmly stepped forward, and the ripple continued to spread, flaying alive all of the Outsiders it passed, transforming them into skeletons.

Cracking sounds began to emanate out as the skeletons, which were not yet dead, began to tremble. As they fell down, they transformed into chunks of bone and ash. However, their skulls remained, within which their souls were still trapped, letting out indescribably miserable screams.

The hosts from the Vast Expanse School were left completely shocked. Meng Hao was like an underworld deity, whose passage caused flesh and blood to vanish, and left behind only skeletons.

By the time he passed through the entire 14th Heaven, not a single Outsider remained who had a flesh and blood body. They were all skeletons, who toppled down to the ground. Inside their skulls, their souls writhed, screaming in voices that only divine sense could hear.

Their pain was impossible to describe, both the pain of being flayed alive and also the twisting of their souls. Their bodies were telling them that they were dead, and yet the pain was telling them that they weren't.

Meng Hao looked out over the land mass, and some of the hatred within

his eyes faded. And yet it was still intensely powerful. He waved his hand, causing all of the skulls to fly up and converge together in the air. It was a sea of skulls, each one containing a soul. Screams echoed out, pleading for mercy. They were begging Meng Hao, not to free them, but simply to kill them.

“Dying isn’t that easy,” Meng Hao said softly, waving his finger out in front of him. Cracking sounds emanated out as fissures spread out across the surfaces of the skulls. Instantly, the pain inflicted upon them was increased by tenfold.

As they screamed, more cracking sounds echoed out, and more fissures appeared.

A moment later, the pain was so intense that the souls were slamming against the bone, trying to escape. They tried to kill themselves, but were unable. The only thing they accomplished was adding further cracks to the skulls, leading to even more shocking pain.

Meng Hao took his time. Several hours later, the skulls were transforming into ash. The pain experienced by the souls exceeded that of hell, or of death. Their screams caused Heaven and Earth to grow dark. The Outsiders down below trembled. Some were so shaken that they collapsed mentally, and yet, because dying was not permitted, they remained alive.

However, the fate of the souls was not complete. After their torment, they didn’t fade away. Meng Hao waved his sleeve, sending them into the sea of flames up above, to endure eternal torment.

Having accomplished these things, the hatred within Meng Hao’s eyes had faded a bit. He reached down and pushed onto the surface of the land mass, and the 14th Heaven shattered. Rubble rained down onto the 13th Heaven, which shook violently. The screams of the Outsiders echoed out as mountains were destroyed and rivers choked up.

Meng Hao hovered in midair, looking down coldly at the terrified Outsiders below. Some of them flew up into the air, and just as he was about to wave his finger, a bellow echoed out from the 13th Heaven, a

bellow filled with both rage and supplication.

“Meng Hao!” An Outsider flew out who looked like an old man, an 8-Essences Paragon. He looked up at Meng Hao, clasped hands and bowed.

“Meng Hao, it is right and proper for you to come to the 33 Heavens to seek revenge. Considering what we did, it is fitting that you to wish to exterminate us. But... why must you torment everyone? Just kill us!

“Not everyone here participated in the destruction of the Mountain and Sea Realm. There are innocents here, people who never fought in any war. I beg of you, torment us, but spare them!” Trembling, the man dropped to his knees and kowtowed.

The other Outsiders fell silent. Some, in their bitterness, dropped to their knees. The sight of such supplication caused the cultivators from the Vast Expanse School to sigh.

Meng Hao looked quietly at the old man. He closed his eyes for a moment, and when they opened, his expression flickered, and he looked down at the land below.

As he did, his eyes were suddenly shot with blood. To the terror of the Outsiders, he took a step forward, appearing a moment later within a vast plain.

After the Outsider Paragon realized where Meng Hao was standing, he shivered, and suddenly looked very nervous.

As he stood there, Meng Hao waved his hand, and the lands around him began to quake and crumble. A huge crater opened up, revealing a huge basin. Apparently, the reason it was now a vast plain was because countless skeletons had been buried there....

Those skeletons even contained the remains of children. Bite marks could be seen on the bones, bearing witness to the unimaginable torment they had undergone prior to death.

These bones weren't Outsiders. They were... people of the Mountain and Sea Realm!

Back when the Mountain and Sea Realm had been destroyed, not everyone made it onto the Mountain and Sea Butterfly. Many had been captured by the Outsiders of the 33 Heavens.

Cultivators and mortals alike had become playthings to the Outsiders, and even food....

The 13th Heaven actually served as a hub for such activity. These particular Outsiders indulged in unique proclivities. Because of that, and because of the fact that they eventually gave rise to a Paragon, it ensured that most of the Mountain and Sea Realm cultivators ended up here, where they became nothing more than commodities to be traded between Outsiders.

Among the skeletons were some which had died as shortly as half of a sixty-year-cycle ago. Furthermore, according to Meng Hao's divine sense, there were no longer any living cultivators of the Mountain and Sea Realm within the 33 Heavens. Clearly, they had been slowly exterminated over the course of the past two thousand years, and buried here in a mass grave.

It was a massive pit of corpses.

There had been nothing like this among the land masses of the other Heavens which had been recently destroyed. Meng Hao looked at the deep pit, and then the killing intent in his eyes grew even more intense. All of a sudden, he felt as if his previous methods had been too merciful.

He turned, then extended his hand and pointed out at the land mass. No ripple spread out. Instead, he altered the natural laws, simultaneously sending divine sense into the minds of the Outsiders of the 13th Heaven.

"I will give you one chance. Those of you who never killed any cultivators of the Mountain and Sea Realm may experience a quick death. In addition, your soul will not be cast into the sea of flames.

"Your fate will be determined by your own memories!" As the words left his mouth, Heaven and Earth trembled. The Outsiders of the 13th Heaven began to shake, and their eyes went blank as numerous images rose up in their minds, their own memories.

They recalled everything which had occurred when the Mountain and Sea Realm was destroyed, and after. Suddenly, all of the Mountain and Sea Realm cultivators who they had killed in the past suddenly seemed to live again, and began to charge toward them with hatred and murderous intent.

The Outsiders wanted to fight back, but were stunned to find that they couldn't move. The cultivators they had killed in the past now pounced on them in their own memories.

Miserable shrieks began to ring out from the mouths of the Outsiders of the 13th Heaven.

All living beings in the 33 Heavens were Outsiders. However, their manner of giving birth was different than cultivators. The shortest pregnancy term among them was half of a sixty-year-cycle, and the longest was a hundred years.

As such, the Outsiders born after the Mountain and Sea Realm war, although they might not have actually participated in the fighting, and had been referred to as innocents, had still participated in the sadistic murder of many Mountain and Sea cultivators.

Meng Hao looked coldly at the Outsiders as black smoke began to rise up off of their heads, the density of which indicated how many Mountain and Sea cultivators they had killed over the years. As he looked out over the land mass, he could not find a single Outsider who had no black smoke rising up!

"Death cannot wipe out your crimes!" With that, he waved his hand.

Chapter 1551: I'll Wait For You On the 10th Heaven!

The 13th Heaven was completely shaken. Countless Outsiders had black smoke emanating from their heads, which then swirled around them and bored into their eyes, ears, noses, and mouths. Their eyes went wide, shining with pain. Soon, they began to topple over to the ground as they were killed by the Mountain and Sea Realm cultivators in their own memories!

This was the same magical technique that Meng Hao had dealt with when fighting the will of Allheaven in the form of Chen Fan. That, of course, was before he had reached Transcendence. He had never faced anything like that before, and it affected him deeply. After Transcending, his own cultivation base allowed him to understand how the technique worked.

Transcendent cultivators... were omnipotent!

All they had to do was think of something, and it could be done!

It was a Realm occupied by the Immortal, the God, the Devil, the Ghost, and the Demon!

Meng Hao waved his hand, and the 13th Heaven collapsed. The souls of the dead Outsiders were extracted and thrown into the sea of flames to burn.

As the 13th Heaven fell apart, flaming rubble smashed into the 12th Heaven below. Mountains collapsed, buildings were destroyed, cities were ravaged.

The Outsiders of the 12th Heaven laughed bitterly. They wanted to fight back, but were unable to. They wanted to self-detonate, but couldn't. The only thing they could do was wait to die.

Furthermore, the sea of flames up above contained innumerable burning souls, which led the remaining Outsiders to clearly understand that death... was not the end for them. True death was not such an easy thing.

Meng Hao looked coldly at the 12th Heaven for a moment before sending his divine sense out.

“I hereby seal your minds, and reduce you to nothing but instinct. Slaughter your fellows!” Instantly, all of the Outsiders on the 12th Heaven began to tremble. Most of these particular Outsiders had two heads with red eyes, and grossly fat bodies that almost didn’t resemble humans. As of this moment, their minds were suddenly taken over. Erased.

The energy of Heaven and Earth was Meng Hao’s Daosource energy, and it was all-powerful. If I want you to have something, you WILL have it. If I don’t want you to have something, you WILL NOT have it!

Rumbling could be heard as the two-headed Outsiders let out ferocious roars. Their minds were gone, leaving behind only animalistic instinct. Meng Hao’s echoing voice had left them bereft of their nature, and without a second thought, they turned and began to viciously attack their fellow people.

Of course, Meng Hao didn’t completely remove their minds. They were still there, just unable to do anything other than watch. There was no way for them to interfere with their own instincts.

Meng Hao hovered in midair, watching the slaughter. A moment later, he suddenly realized that this revenge did not make him happy. He only felt deep grief.

Within that grief, he couldn’t help but ask himself if he was any different from the Outsiders back when they were exacting their revenge. After some thought, he realized something.

The slaughtering didn’t make him happy. Although he was smiling, that smile contained profound sadness. He was being ruthless to be sure, but that ruthlessness came because of bitterness that came from thousands of years in the past.

When one lives in a world of hatred, then either they die, or their enemies die!

Back when the Outsiders had been massacring the cultivators of the

Mountain and Sea Realm, they had been excited, elated even.

Meng Hao looked down at the land mass below. As the Outsiders ripped each other to shreds like animals, their bloodcurdling screams gradually began to fade away. Soon, everything was quiet.

By this point, the bloody battle royale resulted in only a handful of Outsiders remaining alive. Meng Hao waved his hand, causing countless souls to fly up into the sea of flames. Then, the 12th Heaven's land mass was destroyed, causing rubble to rain down onto the 11th Heaven.

There, the Outsiders were trembling. They began to shout, eyes filled with hatred, fear, and entreaties.

Meng Hao looked at them calmly for a moment, the red glow in his eyes growing more intense. Then he reached out with his right hand and made a pushing gesture.

Instantly, the entire land mass began to quake and distort. Mountains twisted, the ground shifted, rivers evaporated. The entire 11th Heaven began to change shape, as if it were being kneaded by giant hands. Soon, it no longer looked like a land mass. Instead, it resembled a giant clay pill furnace!

The land mass became the pill furnace, and the Outsiders became the medicinal ingredients. When the Outsiders from the 10th Heaven saw what was happening, they were overwhelmed by despair.

Meng Hao looked at gargantuan pill furnace, then snapped his fingers. Rumbling sounds echoed out as it began to heat up, rapidly turning crimson from the intense heat. This was a pill-concocting magic in which the entire continent was used to refine all the Outsiders into... a gigantic medicinal pill of gore!

The huge pill furnace trembled, and screaming began to echo out. However, the sounds soon faded away. In the end, nothing could be heard at all. Eventually, the pill furnace exploded, and countless souls emerged, which shot into the sea of flames up above. At the same time, a medicinal pill appeared, fist-sized and the color of blood.

Meng Hao looked at the pill, his expression placid. Only by looking closely would it be possible to see the exhaustion and grief in his eyes. After a moment, he flicked his sleeve, sending the medicinal pill flying toward the old lizard.

“Take it,” he said.

The lizard gaped in shock. Then it eyed the pill for a moment before chomping it down. The lizard shivered, and then visibly grew younger.

Meng Hao looked down at the 10th Heaven for a moment, and the despairing Outsiders there, before finally closing his eyes and taking a deep breath. He had come to a realization just now.

“Getting revenge alone is a bit selfish. I’ve been suffocating for thousands of years, but so have all the cultivators of the Mountain and Sea Realm.

“Pressure like that can only be released by the blood of the Outsiders.” His eyes shone brightly as he waved his hand in the direction of the remaining Heavens.

“I hereby decree that all Outsiders from the other Heavens will drop an entire cultivation realm!” His words instantly changed the natural laws of the 1st through 10th Heavens. In that instant, all Outsiders trembled as their cultivation bases were thrown into chaos, and they dropped by an entire realm!

7-Essences became Dao Sovereigns. 6-Essences dropped to 5-Essences. 1-Essence Dao Realm experts reverted to the Ancient Realm. Not a single Outsider escaped.

This was not a sealing. This was a true and utter loss, something unrecoverable.

“I hereby strip away all Outsiders’ divine sense!

“I hereby strip away all Outsiders’ power of flight!

“I hereby strip away all Outsiders’ regenerative powers!” Each sentence echoed like Heaven-rending Earth-crushing thunder. Natural laws were

born and changed, and as soon as the words left his mouth, they became reality.

Instantly, all remaining Outsiders' cultivation bases dropped, their divine sense was rendered useless, and they couldn't fly.

This was not something that could be accomplished by means of divine abilities and magical techniques. It was like a Godly miracle, an Immortal magic, or a Demonic Dao!

By now, all the Outsiders had experienced the terrifying and unimaginable nature of Meng Hao's cultivation realm. The most powerful experts who remained alive in the various Heavens trembled as they spoke Meng Hao's level aloud.

"... Transcendence!" The powerful experts' despair had reached the pinnacle as they realized that even the Immortal God Continent and the Devil Realm Continent would be like ants in comparison to a Transcendent cultivator.

Because the Mountain and Sea Realm had produced a Transcendent cultivator, it was destined... to shake the starry sky.

At the same time, Meng Hao's gaze pierced down through the Heavenly land masses into the Mountain and Sea Butterfly. Kindness could be seen in his eyes as he waved his finger.

Instantly, the Mountain and Sea Butterfly shivered, and its wings flapped. It was as if the gate to the world had been opened, as countless Mountain and Sea Realm cultivators instantly flew out.

"I hereby bless all Mountain and Sea cultivators' divine sense power!

"I hereby bless all Mountain and Sea cultivators' power to fly through the starry sky!

"I hereby bless all Mountain and Sea cultivators' magical techniques!

"I hereby bless all Mountain and Sea cultivators' fleshly body power!

"I hereby bless all Mountain and Sea cultivators' regenerative powers!

"I hereby... give all you my blessing!" As Meng Hao's voice echoed out,

the cultivators of the Mountain and Sea Realm flying out from the butterfly felt their cultivation bases rumbling. All of them began to radiate blinding light.

Many of them were stunned. Although they couldn't see Meng Hao through all of the land masses, they could hear his soft voice in their minds.

“Mountain and Sea cultivators, I am Meng Hao.... The hatred of the Mountain and Sea Realm has been simmering for thousands of years. Sacrifice the blood of the Outsiders to rise up from within the sea of hatred. Soar high into the starry sky. The time has come to remould the Mountain and Sea Realm. I will be waiting for you on the 10th Heaven.”

Meng Hao's gaze then came to rest on the wings of the Mountain and Sea Butterfly. There, he could see his father and mother, as well as a young woman who was there to accompany them.

She wore a long white garment, and was beautiful. She looked just like Meng Hao remembered her: simple, pure, and resolute. However, she somehow seemed... more fragile than before.

Chapter 1552: The Traitorous Ninth Sea!

A tremor ran through Xu Qing as she slowly looked up at the 1st Heaven, which stretched out overhead like the sky. She could feel Meng Hao looking at her from somewhere high up above.

She smiled, a smile of anticipation, and of happiness. Numerous thoughts and memories filled her mind, and her eyes glowed with a warmth that could melt all the ice in Heaven and Earth.

Rumbling could be heard as countless figures flew up from within the world of the Mountain and Sea Butterfly. They were led by Grandpa Meng, Ksitigarbha, the Paragon puppet, and... Ke Jiusi!

Those four were the most powerful cultivators in the Mountain and Sea Realm, and it was without hesitation that they led the charge toward the 1st Heaven.

Their cultivation bases had leapt up to a higher level. They could regenerate from wounds faster, their divine sense and Daoist magics were more powerful. Their current battle prowess could shake Heaven and Earth.

The Paragon puppet had experienced an even more shocking transformation. During the centuries that Meng Hao had been away, it hadn't moved at all. However, as its battle prowess increased, it changed. It was as though some severed connection had finally been mended.

Heaven shook and the Earth trembled as the four Paragons led everyone into battle. Fatty, Wang Youcai, Fang Yu, Li Ling'er, and Zhixiang all appeared, as did many other familiar faces. Behind them were even more Mountain and Sea cultivators. The old-timers had experienced the destruction of the Mountains and Seas, and the younger ones had been raised hearing the legends of Meng Hao.

Now, they attacked with explosive force.

Meng Hao had endured thousands of years of pressure, as had the other cultivators of the Mountain and Sea Realm. Meng Hao needed to vent, to

get his revenge, and they did too.

Thus, he had left the 1st through 10th Heavens for just that purpose.

The root of all of their hatred would now be cut away. Nothing would remain to drag them down.

Countless Mountain and Sea Realm cultivators fought their way into the 1st Heaven, and soon, miserable shrieks began to ring out. The Outsiders fought back, struggled, and yet their cultivation bases had been restricted. Their divine sense was gone, and the power of their divine abilities and magical techniques had been weakened. It only took moments before they were being routed.

Despite their struggling, the Mountain and Sea Realm cultivators' revenge was carried out with ease. In fact, the Outsiders couldn't even injure them.

If Meng Hao could exact vengeance with such madness, there was no need to even mention how madly the other cultivators of the Mountain and Sea Realm would fight.

Tears streamed down their faces as they shouted, unleashing the power of their cultivation bases. Any Outsider they found, they destroyed as easily as dried twigs. That was especially true of the old-timers who had fought in the war of the past. Their tears flowed especially hard.

"Master, can you see, sir? It is for you that I get revenge!!" These words were spoken by a man with white hair and a face full of wrinkles. He seemed old, but he was in fact middle-aged. He fought with madness, weeping, cutting down one Outsider after another until he was soaked with blood. And yet he didn't seem to tire at all.

"Shanshan, you threw yourself in front of me to save me from the blow of an Outsider. When you died, my heart broke. The only reason I kept living was for vengeance. I had to get revenge, and I had to kill the Outsiders one and all. All Outsiders must die!" A middle-aged cultivator stood on the battlefield, his eyes bloodshot, crying and laughing simultaneously as he slaughtered the surrounding Outsiders.

“Dad, mom, big brother, I’ll never forget the hatred which blossomed in my heart back then. Now, I can finally avenge you!” It was an old man who lunged forward and latched his teeth onto the throat of a terrified Outsider. When he ripped the Outsider’s throat out, blood sprayed out like a fountain. Then the man’s laughter rang out over the battlefield.

The cultivators of the Mountain and Sea Realm fought with madness, especially the ones who had gone through the war all those years ago.

“I’m the only survivor from my sect. Today I will slaughter a hundred thousand Outsiders as a sacrifice to the heroes who died!”

“Kill them all!”

“The only thing that kept me going was the thought of revenge!”

They fought with complete viciousness, and soon, all of the Outsiders in the 1st Heaven were wiped out. After that, they charged toward the 2nd Heaven.

As for the other cultivators who had been born throughout the past centuries, their hatred wasn’t as profound. However, from birth, they had listened to tales of the past recounted by their seniors, and they had been raised with the 33 Heavens weighing down on them from above.

They had seen depictions of the Mountain and Sea Realm of the past, and had heard the stories about the Nine Mountains and Nine Seas.

Of course, they were only stories, mere descriptions, and the Mountain and Sea Realm itself was somewhat of a vague concept. Therefore, they didn’t possess a profound and consuming hatred.

But then they saw the old veterans of the Mountain and Sea War, people who were normally calm and reserved, suddenly rave with madness. The hearts of the younger ones were profoundly shaken by that.

They suddenly understood how truly intense that hatred was which had been described to them in the stories. Those old-timers... could not allow their enemies to remain alive.

The younger ones were profoundly shaken, and soon, the feelings seeped

into their own veins. Scattered memories began to rise up within them, memories that all inhabitants of the Mountain and Sea Realm held in eternally within their blood.

Because of those newly awakened memories, and because of the madness surrounding them, the younger ones who had been born over the past centuries began to fight with a madness that rivaled that of the older generation.

Fatty wept as he fought. He was a massive ball of flesh, and yet he was surprisingly agile as he lunged forward and wiped out any Outsiders who got in his way.

“You killed my 300 Daoist partners! Damn you, you beasts! You killed my 300 beloved partners!!

“And my children! And my grandchildren! Damn you. I won’t rest until you’re dead!”

Shockingly, Fatty was surrounded by a group of over ten thousand cultivators who all called him Patriarch. Those who fought at his side included men and women, old and young. Among them were the new Daoist partners he had taken in over the past centuries, as well as his new children and grandchildren.

He had single-handedly created a vast clan, the likes of which could only be rivaled by the clan founded by the eighth reincarnation of Meng Hao’s clone.

The 2nd Heaven soon shattered. The army of cultivators of the Mountain and Sea Realm marched with bloodshot eyes to the 3rd Heaven, and then the 4th.

The starry sky dripped with blood. Wang Youcai’s eyes were closed, but he held a sword in his hand. When he unleashed his cultivation base, countless Outsiders were ripped to shreds. He left their heads intact, though, collecting them and stringing them up until they flowed like a river behind him.

That river of heads was like a cape, giving him a profoundly fiendish

appearance. Any Outsiders who saw him were struck with dread.

Among the army of cultivators was the Fang Clan, who fought just as viciously as everyone else.

Soon the Mountain and Sea cultivators arrived at the 6th Heaven. Their revenge was reaching a climax. Their eyes were bright red as they exploded out from underneath the pressure of centuries.

Li Ling'er wept as she fought, her teeth clenched as she thought about Paragon Sea Dream. It didn't matter that she was a woman, she unleashed intense slaughter nonetheless. She wasn't beautiful like she had been when she was young; she was now an ancient old woman. And yet, she was willing to pay any price to continue the legacy of Paragon Sea Dream.

The 6th Heaven fell, and the battle moved on to the 7th Heaven. Zhixiang looked like a specter as she fought the Outsiders. Years ago, she had called herself Demoness. Now, she was the Sect Leader of the Demon Immortal Sect, which was one of the three great sects in the Mountain and Sea Butterfly. And that was because... Ke Jiusi had become a Paragon, and returned to join the Demon Immortal Sect.

As their revenge was carried out, and the slaughter continued, most eye-catching of all was not the fighting between the four Paragons of the Mountains and Seas and the Paragons from the various Heavens. Instead... it was a huge turtle!

Countless cultivators flew off of the back of that turtle to fight viciously with the Outsiders. The turtle head-butted the 7th Heaven, crushing it. Then he threw his head back and roared, charging toward the 8th Heaven.

"Fudge! The Patriarch's successor disciple is back! Isn't the Patriarch awesome!? Hey don't run, Outsiders! Dammit. I have some good fortune for you!"

However, even as the huge turtle began to move in the direction of the 8th Heaven, countless ripples surged out as that huge land mass transformed into... a sea!

As soon as the sea appeared, Meng Hao's gaze fell upon it.

“The traitor of the Mountains and Seas, the Ninth Sea.”

Chapter 1553: The Return of the Demon Sovereign!

Meng Hao stared at the Ninth Sea.

It had been hiding on the 8th Heaven, which was no surprise to him.

Back in the Mountain and Sea War, the Ninth Sea had turned traitor, casting Shui Dongliu's plan into peril. It became much more difficult for the Mountain and Sea Butterfly to escape, and also ensured that fewer Mountain and Sea Realm cultivators were able to make it to the butterfly to begin with.

The Ninth Sea's sudden betrayal at a critical moment had a huge effect on the Mountain and Sea Realm.

From that moment on, all Mountain and Sea Realm cultivators came to have a deep hatred for that sea.

The cultivators born in subsequent centuries heard the story of the Ninth Sea's traitorous act, but up to now, it had been just that: nothing more than a story....

Now, though, the entire 8th Heaven had transformed from being a land mass into a majestic sea.

Gradually, a face came to be visible within it, the face of a woman, surrounded by innumerable sea beasts.

"Ninth Sea!" growled Ksitigarbha as he delivered the death blow to one of the Outsider Paragons. His eyes flickered with killing intent, and his voice boomed like thunder. A moment later, he was flying directly toward the Ninth Sea.

Grandpa Meng looked up, eyes flickering with memories of the past. He also began to fly toward the Ninth Sea at top speed.

Patriarch Reliance had originally been planning to head-butt the land mass of the 8th Heaven. But now that he saw it transform into sea water, his eyes went wide, and he positioned himself as if to advance. However,

instead of advancing, he began to retreat. Strangely, the words coming out of his mouth seemed to indicate anything but retreat.

“Kill! Kill! Dammit! Trifling seawater! The Patriarch isn’t scared of you. DIIIEE....” However, he continued to retreat until he was far off in the distance.

Soon, rumbling could be heard from within the Ninth Sea as countless sea beasts flew out toward the Mountain and Sea Realm cultivators. Fatty, Wang Youcai, Li Ling’er, and all the others were joined by the rest of the Mountain and Sea cultivators as they transformed into beams of light which shot into battle.

Booming sounds rang out that could shake Heaven and Earth. The sea beasts of the Ninth Sea began to scream miserably as they were cut down by the Mountain and Sea Realm cultivators. Soon, the Ninth Sea was stained red with blood.

The sea began to shrink, opening up a path to the 9th Heaven, which some of the Mountain and Sea cultivators took. Patriarch Reliance’s eyes rolled up in thought for a moment, and then he headed toward the 9th Heaven as well.

Immediately, a path was torn open through the battlefield in this region.

It only took a moment for fighting to break out on the 9th Heaven. Soon the 9th Heaven was destroyed, and finally... the army advanced to the 10th Heaven!

They didn’t immediately attack, though. Instead they looked for Meng Hao, who had spoken into their minds that he would meet them on the 10th Heaven.

To the veterans of the Mountain and Sea War, Meng Hao’s name was something engraved deeply in their hearts. To all the other cultivators born in the subsequent centuries, he was both a stranger, and yet oddly familiar.

He was a stranger because they had never met him in person. He was familiar because there were countless statues of him in the Mountain and

Sea Butterfly. Furthermore, stories about his deeds were told so often that virtually everyone had memorized them.

Meng Hao had long since been deified within the world of the Mountain and Sea Butterfly!

To the Mountain and Sea cultivators, he was their god, the will of Heaven, the Lord of the Mountain and Sea Realm!

Almost immediately, the cultivators who arrived on the 10th Heaven could see Meng Hao hovering in midair, and he looked exactly like all of the statues which depicted him!

In fact, he seemed even more grand and majestic than the statues.

However, the mere sight of him was of secondary importance. Even more shocking was that all the cultivators of the Mountain and Sea Realm suddenly felt their blood surging through their veins. Their cultivation bases rocketed up, almost as if the person they were looking at was the source of their bloodline!

It was an indescribable feeling, and resulted in all of the cultivators who had stepped onto the 10th Heaven clasp hands and bowing.

“Patriarch Demon Sovereign!!”

“Greetings, exalted Demon Sovereign!”

“Greetings, Patriarch!”

“Demon Sovereign!!”

“Patriarch!!!” The sound of the excited Mountain and Sea cultivators shouting out caused everything to tremble.

The surrounding Outsiders took advantage of the moment to attack, and yet before they could reach the area occupied by the Mountain and Sea cultivators, they were transformed into ash. Apparently, only the people of the Mountains and Seas were permitted to be there. Anyone else who tried to enter would be destroyed in body and soul!

Everyone was crying out to the Patriarch, to the Demon Sovereign. As additional cultivators arrived, they looked up, and were profoundly shaken

by the sight of Meng Hao. Their eyes burned with passion, with ardor, with veneration.

As for the cultivators who had been raised on stories of the venerated Meng Hao, when they saw him, they didn't just bow in respect, but in worship!

The ground quaked as more and more cultivators arrived on the 10th Heaven. Even more struck with emotion were all of the old-timers who had fought in the Mountain and Sea War.

"It's Meng Hao!"

"Meng Hao's back!"

"He's back, Meng Hao the Demon Sovereign!" Their voices were filled with happiness, and they wept tears of joy. Years ago, Meng Hao had fought to protect the Mountain and Sea Butterfly, blocking the path of the Immortal God Continent and the Devil Realm. It was something that those cultivators would never be able to forget.

As Meng Hao hovered there looking down at the crowds, he heard their cries, and tears welled up in his eyes.

It felt like he was reuniting with his family, people he had missed profoundly for centuries.

"I am Meng Hao, and... I'm back!" His voice was soft, and yet echoed like thunder, smashing through the entire 10th Heaven. With that, he began to descend.

That movement caused all of the Outsiders to tremble in fear, and let out miserable shrieks. They felt as if countless invisible mountains were crushing down onto them.

That was pressure from Meng Hao, his aura, and as he descended, the Outsiders on the land mass... all exploded.

"Demon Sovereign!"

"Demon Sovereign!!"

"Demon Sovereign!!!" Countless Mountain and Sea cultivators flew to his

side, all of them shouting in passion and veneration.

“Let’s go home!” Meng Hao said. The cheering grew louder as the cultivators clustered around him and headed downward. Behind them, the 10th Heaven transformed into nothing more than ash!

As of this moment, there were no land masses above the Mountain and Sea Butterfly. There was only... a trembling, shrinking sea.

The cheering of the Mountain and Sea cultivators grew louder, causing powerful ripples to spread out in all directions. The group who had been besieging the Ninth Sea all looked over at Meng Hao, trembling.

Fatty was shaking visibly, and as soon as he saw Meng Hao, he let out a loud cry and flew toward him, laughing. A moment later, he was directly in front of Meng Hao, who he wrapped up into a huge bear hug.

“Meng Hao, Meng Hao, Meng Hao... you’re finally back. I’ve missed you so much, you don’t even know! Two thousand years. Can you imagine? Lots of people thought you were dead, but not me. I knew that you wouldn’t die. Meng Hao, Meng Hao, Meng Hao....” Fatty was so excited he was crying and laughing. The two of them had been friends for so many centuries that Meng Hao had become an inseparable part of him.

Meng Hao slapped Fatty’s shoulders, equally as excited.

Fatty’s Daoist partners and offspring all stared wide-eyed. The sight of their Patriarch acting in such a way was completely shocking. All of them quickly dropped to their knees to kowtow to Meng Hao.

Another figure appeared, shooting along at high speed. It was... Fang Yu, Meng Hao’s older sister!

She looked like a grown-up woman now, and tears poured down her face as she landed in front of Meng Hao and then hugged him.

“Sister, I’m back....” Meng Hao said softly. He looked over at Wang Youcai off in the distance. For centuries, Wang Youcai’s face had been covered with a grim expression, but now there was an excited grin.

Meng Hao saw Ksitigarbha, who looked over at him and started

laughing. Then there was his Grandpa Meng, who gazed at him kindly, tears streaming down his cheeks.

Li Ling'er was there, an old woman now. Zhixiang was in the crowd as well, a complex expression on her face as she seemed to be thinking about past times. She was mostly happy, though, and excited.

There was Sun Hai, Meng Hao's brother-in-law. His first reaction upon seeing Meng Hao was to be excited, but then he looked a bit afraid. At the same time, he felt proud. After all, he was Meng Hao's brother-in-law....

Among all the other familiar faces was Ke Jiusi, who looked over at Meng Hao and smiled warmly. It didn't matter how powerful Meng Hao had become, to Ke Jiusi, he was still his younger brother.

Eventually, Meng Hao looked down through the starry sky to the Mountain and Sea Butterfly. He saw his father and mother, and he saw his wife Xu Qing, who was standing next to them. At that point, his heart filled with a warmth it had lacked for many years.

"I'm back!"

Chapter 1554: Transcendence Treasure!

Tears streamed down Xu Qing's face, and she smiled. Meng Hao's father and mother stood next to her, looking extremely excited and proud.

This was their son. Their Meng Hao!

As all of the Mountain and Sea cultivators burst with excitement, the Ninth Sea was off in the distance, battling with the Paragon puppet.

The Ninth Sea had been pushed to the limit in the fighting, and had shrunk down so much that it was no longer boundless and majestic like before.

Now, it appeared to be trying to take advantage of the commotion caused by the appearance of Meng Hao. The woman's face appeared within it as it began to back up as if to flee. At that point, Meng Hao looked over.

"Did I say you could leave?" he asked coolly.

His gaze struck the Ninth Sea like a physical blow. It began vibrating, and the woman's face filled with fear. His voice was like the magical law of Heaven and Earth, which instantly locked down the path of escape.

At the same time, all of the Mountain and Sea cultivators turned to look at the Ninth Sea, their gazes bursting with killing intent. That was especially true of the veterans of the Mountain and Sea War, who hated the Ninth Sea deep in their bones.

Upon facing the gazes of so many cultivators, the womanly face of the Ninth Sea let out an enraged roar.

"You forced me to do what I did. You are the Lord of the Mountain and Sea Realm, and you swore an oath to erase my mind. What other choice did I have but to betray the Mountain and Sea Realm!?"

"It was you! All of this is because of you! You wanted to exterminate my people, you wanted to wipe me out. I had to fight back, I had to resist. My betrayal is all your fault!"

At first, Meng Hao didn't say anything in response to the Ninth Sea's howling. But then he sighed.

"That scheme of yours lurked in your duplicitous heart for ages. Why try to pin the blame on me? Even without that oath of mine, you would have picked a good time to turn traitor." Considering the level of his cultivation base, and his experience, he had long since come to a clear understanding of the Ninth Sea's actions.

The Ninth Sea hesitated for a moment, then bitterly cried, "I wasn't in the wrong. I just wanted to be able to think for myself. I didn't want to be a part of the Mountain and Sea Realm forever!" Suddenly, the seawater churned, and the face of the woman shot away as if to flee.

However, it was obvious that she wouldn't be able to escape. In fact, her decision wasn't really an attempt to flee, but rather, a way to seek death. By this point, there was nothing she could do to change everything which had occurred.

"After you die," Meng Hao said, "everything will be a thing of the past. Ashes to ashes, dust to dust...."

"You don't need the Mountain and Sea Realm, and the future Mountain and Sea Realm doesn't need you...." Meng Hao extended his right hand and made a vicious grasping motion toward the Ninth Sea. It was as if an enormous, invisible hand had grabbed the woman's face, preventing her from fleeing no matter how much she struggled, and no matter how much the water churned. Then, he jerked his hand, sending the Ninth Sea flying into the flames above.

The Mountain and Sea Realm cultivators watched as the face that represented the Ninth Sea plunged into the sea of flames and began to burn. Screams echoed out as the face shrank down and down. Soon, the only thing left behind was the Ninth Sea's soul!

There it burned within the fire, unable to die.

Meng Hao waved his finger, causing all of the souls of the Outsiders who had been killed in the 1st through 10th Heavens to fly out into the open.

They cried out for mercy, and terror filled their faces, but all Meng Hao did was wave his sleeve, sending the boundless collection of souls flying up in a beam of light into the sea of flames.

As the souls entered the fire, they began to burn among the countless other Outsider souls.

The sight of it caused the Mountain and Sea cultivators to tremble, not from fear, but from the fact that their revenge had finally been carried out.

“See that, Master? Master, I avenged your death!”

“Dad, mom, your son has gained vengeance!”

“Di Kongzi, the day you died, I promised that if I made it out alive, I would get revenge for you. Finally, it’s happened!”

“I hope the Patriarchs and the sect can all rest in peace....” Countless wailing voices could be heard from the cultivators who had fought in the Mountain and Sea War. Every one of them had a story of their own, friends or family who had been killed. Finally, their revenge had been exacted, and they wept, wrapped up in their thoughts of the past. The sound of the crying echoed out into the void.

Fatty sobbed, as if he were able to see all of his Daoist partners and children from the past standing around him. Wang Youcai had a bitter expression on his face as he thought back to his life in the sects he had been a part of.

Ksitigarbha laughed bitterly, and also cried. Li Ling’er murmured Sea Dream’s name.

Zhixiang trembled. Considering the level of her cultivation base back during the war, it was somewhat of a miracle that she even survived. Many stories could be told based on the events of her life.

Every one of the old-timers wept.

Meng Hao’s eyes shone with grief as he thought back to the past, and the unforgettably bitter events which had propelled him from being almost like a silkpants cultivator to maturity.

After a long, long moment passed, something happened. It was hard to say who did it first, but the Mountain and Sea Realm cultivators began to wipe away their tears and then drop to their knees.

“Many thanks, Demon Sovereign!”

One by one, they began to kowtow, until all of the Mountain and Sea Realm cultivators were crying out to him.

“Many thanks, Demon Sovereign!!”

“Many thanks, Demon Sovereign!!!”

Meng Hao took a deep breath and looked around at everyone. The truth was that he could have easily wiped out the 33 Heavens by himself. But he didn't. He gave them an opportunity for revenge.

It was not his revenge alone. It belonged to all of the cultivators of the Mountain and Sea Realm!

Of course, Meng Hao knew that this was only part of their revenge. The Immortal God Continent and the Devil Realm Continent still had to be dealt with. By now, he was almost completely sure that his speculations about them were true. He was also certain that the will of Allheaven would drive the two land masses to come to attack him.

“I made two promises in the past...” Meng Hao said softly, looking around at the crowds. The cultivators of the Mountain and Sea Realm all looked up at him, their eyes burning with passion.

“One of them was that I would come back.

“The other... was that I would return to where the Mountain and Sea Realm had been destroyed, and rebuild it!” As the words left his mouth, the Mountain and Sea cultivators began to tremble inwardly. That was especially true of the older ones. As for the ones born in more recent times, they were also filled with anticipation. After all, they had heard countless stories of the Nine Mountains and Nine Seas of the Mountain and Sea Realm!

It was their ancestral home too.

Meng Hao extended his hand and made a grasping motion. The void trembled, and rumbling sounds echoed out as a huge vortex appeared, with Meng Hao's hand at the center. In the blink of an eye, it spread out to fill the entire area in the starry sky.

"Oh destroyed Mountains and Seas, by the power of my name, I, Meng Hao, call for you... to return!" As his voice echoed out, natural law changed, and magical law was altered. Shockingly, countless bits of dust and rubble in the area began to rise up.

A mountain boulder that had been hanging in the starry sky for centuries began to vibrate, and then shine with dazzling light!

Drops of water floating about began to move, almost as if they possessed thought, and were waking up. Brilliant light began to shine out.

The effect began to spread out all through the boundless starry sky. Boulders, shattered rock, drops of water, endless dust. Regardless of where they were or what shape they were in, they all began to fly toward Meng Hao!

These were the destroyed remnants of the Mountain and Sea Realm, fragments which were now flying through the void, flying through the starry sky, flying through time itself.

Massive booms rang out as the countless fields of rubble transformed into dazzling beams of light which began to take shape within the vortex.

"First Mountain and Sea!" Meng Hao said, eyes shining with a strange light. He raised both hands into the air, and all reality seemed to shake. All living beings which existed in the starry sky of the Vast Expanse could hear the words he spoke.

"I call upon the power of my name to take the First Hex, the Beginning-Ending Hex, and embody it in the First Mountain and Sea. Henceforth... you are the Beginning-Ending Mountain and Sea, responsible for transformations of seasons within the Mountain and Sea Realm!

"Cultivators in this Mountain and Sea may cultivate my Beginning-Ending Hex, and gain enlightenment of the Essences of beginnings and

endings. This hex will now be called the First Hex of the Mountains and Seas!”

As soon as the words left his mouth, the power of Transcendence propelled the First Hex into the First Mountain and Sea, becoming its foundation.

The Hexing magic became the bones, and the Mountain and Sea became the flesh!

Almost immediately, the shape of the First Sea and the First Mountain became visible!

The cultivators who were originally from the First Mountain and Sea were so excited they were crying. When they saw the sea and the mountain taking shape, they began to tremble. They were looking at their home.

Rumbling could be heard as the First Mountain took final shape, complete with all of its planets!

Meng Hao was not just calling back the old Mountain and Sea Realm, he was refining it, making it into... a new Mountain and Sea Realm!

It was... a Transcendence Treasure!

Chapter 1555: Summoning the Mountains and Seas!

The Mountain and Sea Realm with its Nine Mountains and Nine Seas was originally a precious treasure forged by Paragon Nine Seals when his world was being destroyed, for the purpose of fighting back against the two major powers and the rebel forces.

It was as powerful as a cultivator half a step into Transcendence, which was how it came to be a safe haven for later generations, and even prevented the other major powers from entering.

As time went on, the Mountain and Sea Realm continued to protect the cultivators who lived within it, until the great war occurred over two thousand years in the past. During that time, the Ninth Sea turned traitor, and numerous other events led to the Mountain and Sea Realm being destroyed.

Afterwards, the destroyed remnants were scattered hither and thither.

But now, Meng Hao had created a vortex that sent the entire starry sky rumbling, and caused all of the scattered remnants to turn into dazzling beams of light that converged together, causing the Mountain and Sea Realm to once again form in front of the eyes of all present.

Furthermore, Meng Hao wasn't just putting the pieces back together, he was using the power of Transcendence, and his Demon Sealing Hexing magic, to completely remodel the entire realm.

This really and truly was... using Hexing magic as the bones, and the Mountains and Seas as the flesh!

Rumbling sounds echoed out as the First Mountain and Sea appeared. Then, Meng Hao's voice echoed out and shook the starry sky. Natural laws were altered, and magical laws were torn apart. The cultivators clustered around Meng Hao continued to kowtow excitedly.

That was especially true of those who had fought in the Mountain and Sea War. The cultivators who originally came from the First Mountain and

Sea were nearly hysterical, and couldn't hold back from weeping. As the First Mountain and Sea and its planets were formed, they could finally see the home that they remembered from so long ago.

It was a new Mountain and Sea Realm, and from now on, the First Mountain and Sea would embody Meng Hao's First Hex, the Beginning-Ending Hex!

Cultivators there would have innate superiority when it came to that Beginning-Ending Hex. As that superiority developed and expanded, one could easily imagine the final result!

Furthermore, the newly remoulded First Mountain and Sea also came to be responsible for the seasonal transformations in the Mountain and Sea Realm. The way that spring, summer, fall, and winter occurred on the First Mountain and Sea would affect the entire Mountain and Sea Realm!

Furthermore, whoever became the Lord of the First Mountain and Sea would have ultimate control over all beginnings and endings!

People only continued to be more and more shaken as more and more rubble gathered in the area. Rumbling sounds then echoed out as Meng Hao's voice once again replaced the will of the starry sky, speaking out new natural laws for the Mountains and Seas!

"Second Mountain and Sea! I call upon the power of my name to take the power of the Second Hex, the Real-Unreal Hex, and embody it in the Second Mountain and Sea. Henceforth... you are the Real-Unreal Mountain and Sea! You are responsible for all clarity in the Mountain and Sea Realm, ensuring that all Mountain and Sea cultivators can distinguish between what is real and what is unreal, can think clearly, and remove inner devils!

"Cultivators in this Mountain and Sea may cultivate my Real-Unreal Hex and gain enlightenment of the Essences of reality and unreality. This hex will now be called the Second Hex of the Mountains and Seas!" Meng Hao's words echoed like Heavenly thunder, and at the same time, countless complex ancient magical symbols appeared, which converged behind the First Mountain and Sea. Soon, the shape of the Second Sea and

the Second Mountain took shape.

At the same time, more and more of the fragments of the Mountains and Seas began to form around the magical symbols. Soon, the Second Sea and the Second Mountain fully formed!

The Heavens shook and the starry sky trembled as the Second Mountain and Sea appeared!

Planets also formed around the Second Mountain!

The Mountain and Sea Realm cultivators were cheering in excitement at the shocking sight. As for the cultivators who had originally come from the Second Mountain and Sea, they were weeping with joy.

In the future, those who practiced cultivation in the Second Mountain and Sea would have superior command of the Daos of reality and unreality. They would be able to dispel delusions with ease, and would exceed others in understanding of magical illusions.

The Second Mountain and Sea was responsible for clarity, ensuring that the Mountain and Sea Realm remained free of inner devils. It would protect the cultivators of the realm, and ensure that their practice of cultivation went smoothly. The benefit to the Mountain and Sea Realm as a whole would be no less than that provided by the First Mountain and Sea.

Whoever was Lord of the Second Mountain and Sea would have control over the inner devils of all cultivators in the Mountain and Sea Realm. Without the Second Mountain and Sea, it would be very difficult to dispel such inner devils!

It was as if a new age were dawning. One could easily imagine how a Transcendence Treasure like this could be used, not necessarily just for fighting, but for causing its entire people to rise to new heights of glory.

This was a Mountain and Sea Realm forged specifically for its people, forged to create a new world of cultivation!

It was a level of grandeur that Paragon Nine Seals had only partly attained. Meng Hao was using the power of Transcendence to create a

new Heaven and Earth.

“Third Mountain and Sea!” he roared. Brilliant light shone off of him, making him look like a divine being. He waved his finger at the vortex, eyes shining with a strange light, making him look so glorious that even the stars would bow to him.

“I call upon the power of my name to take the Third Hex, the Present-Ancient Hex, and embody it in the Third Mountain and Sea. Henceforth... you are the Present-Ancient Mountain and Sea, responsible for Time magic within the Mountain and Sea Realm!

“Cultivators in this Mountain and Sea may cultivate my Present-Ancient Hex, and gain enlightenment of the Essences of present and ancient. This hex will now be called the Third Hex of the Mountains and Seas!”

As Meng Hao’s words echoed out, rumbling filled the starry sky. Numerous magical symbols appeared, which formed together into the underlying structure of the Third Mountain and Sea. Then the surrounding rubble was sucked in, converging together until the Third Mountain and Sea was visible for all the cultivators to see.

The Third Sea’s water churned, sending massive waves back and forth!

The Third Mountain rose high into the starry sky, towering and extraordinary!

The Third Hex was the Present-Ancient Hex. Before Meng Hao created the Ninth Hex, it had been considered the most domineering of the Hexes, having been created by the Third Generation Demon Sealer, the most powerful of the Demon Sealers. It could control the flow of time, and now it formed the bones of the newly remoulded Third Mountain and Sea. Simply put, in terms of battle prowess, this Mountain and Sea would be extraordinary compared to the others.

The power of Time flowed about to and fro. Similar to the First and Second Mountains and Seas, the cultivators of the Third Mountain and Sea would have special advantages in their practice of cultivation. They would have incredible, unheard-of control over the Essence of time.

Furthermore, the nature of time in the entire Mountain and Sea Realm would be under the control of the Third Mountain and Sea.

The Mountain and Sea cultivators were prostrating in worship, and even the army of cultivators from the Vast Expanse School were shaking. The Sect Leader and the others, even the old lizard and the other eccentric beings, were all mentally shaken. Although they knew that Transcendent cultivators were all-powerful, to see the evidence in front of their own eyes was mind-blowing.

The deep envy they felt after seeing the First through Third Mountains and Seas helped them to understand the significance of a precious treasure being designed uniquely for its own people. By this point, even they wanted to live in the Mountain and Sea Realm.

“If you lived there, it would be much easier to reach the Dao Realm, and maybe even the peak of 9-Essences. In fact... it might even be possible to Transcend!”

“It’s a Transcendence Treasure. Anyone who Transcends will build... a Transcendence Treasure suitable for their people!”

The cultivators from the Vast Expanse School felt their minds spinning. As for Meng Hao, he looked at the three sets of Mountains and Seas that he had just formed, then took a deep breath and performed an incantation gesture with his right hand. He waved his finger, and the power of Transcendence erupted out, causing all the Heavens to shake.

“Fourth Mountain and Sea!

“I call upon the power of my name to take the Fourth Hex, the Self Hex, and embody it in the Fourth Mountain and Sea. Henceforth... you are the Self Mountain and Sea, responsible for the underworld and reincarnation within the Mountain and Sea Realm!

“Cultivators in this Mountain and Sea may cultivate my Self Hex, and gain enlightenment of the Essence of self. This hex will now be called the Fourth Hex of the Mountains and Seas!”

The starry sky shook under the terrifying might of Meng Hao’s Fourth

Hex, the Self Hex. The Self Hex could spawn millions upon millions of the self, making it the perfect complement to reincarnation. When you added in the fact that the Fourth Mountain and Sea had always been the underworld of the Mountain and Sea Realm, where reincarnation resided, it ensured that this version of the underworld was even more shocking than before. It was truly the final destination for all cultivators of the Mountain and Sea Realm.

Whoever was the Lord of the Fourth Mountain and Sea would control all the dead spirits in the Mountain and Sea Realm!

Each and every one of these four Mountains and Seas were crucial. It was at this point that Meng Hao, without the slightest hesitation, spoke out once more.

“Fifth Mountain and Sea!” he said, his voice echoing like thunder. He waved his sleeve, and the outline of the Fifth Mountain and Sea instantly took shape, causing rumbling sounds to echo out in all directions.

“I call upon the power of my name to take the Fifth Hex, the Inside-Outside Hex, and embody it in the Fifth Mountain and Sea. Henceforth... you are the Inside-Outside Mountain and Sea, responsible for the five elements within the Mountain and Sea Realm!

“Cultivators in this Mountain and Sea may cultivate my Inside-Outside Hex, and gain enlightenment of the Essences of inside and outside. This hex will now be called the Fifth Hex of the Mountains and Seas!”

Instantly, the Hexing magic formed the bones, represented by the countless magical symbols which were converging together. As the outline took shape, the rubble from the destroyed Mountains and Seas converged, and the Fifth Mountain and Sea took shape in front of everyone to hover there in the starry sky.

The Fifth Mountain and Sea relied on the five elements as the foundation of its magic. The five elements were crucial aspects to the practice of cultivation, and from this moment on, all cultivators from the Fifth Mountain and Sea would have extraordinary command of the Dao of the five elements. Whoever was the Lord of the Fifth Mountain and Sea

would control the fundamental aspects of the five elements throughout the entire Mountain and Sea Realm.

“When the five elements appear, Heaven and Earth are opened!” Meng Hao’s eyes shone with bright light as he reached out and made some final adjustments to the Fifth Mountain and Sea.

The Fifth Mountain and Sea was the axis of the Mountain and Sea Realm, and the five elements there were absolutely critical. No mistakes could be tolerated.

In order to be the Lord of any of the Mountains and Seas, not only did one need the approval of the Mountain and Sea Realm itself, one also needed to gain complete enlightenment of the Demon Sealing Hexing magic left behind by Meng Hao!

The Demon Sealing Hexing magic was hidden within the various Mountains and Seas, like their bones!

Only by gaining enlightenment of that Demon Sealing Hexing magic could one eventually qualify to be a Mountain and Sea Lord. Only by that method could one become a successor of the Lord of the Mountain and Sea Realm!

It was now possible to say that the Mountain and Sea Realm had Hexing magic as its bones, the Mountains and Seas as its flesh, and... the League of Demon Sealers as its soul!

Chapter 1556: The Most Powerful Mountain and Sea!

The League was the soul, the Hexing magics were the bones, and the Mountains and Seas were the flesh!

The doctrines of the League of Demon Sealers held sway, which were the same as the doctrines espoused by Meng Hao. By following such precepts, he had become the Crown Prince of the Mountain and Sea Realm. The year he became part of the League of Demon Sealers, he was acknowledged as the future Lord of the Mountain and Sea Realm.

The first version of the Mountain and Sea Realm was forged by Nine Seals, who also left behind the League of Demon Sealers as his legacy. Now Meng Hao was using that legacy to remould the Mountain and Sea Realm into something new.

Anyone who became a Mountain and Sea Lord had to become a successor of the League of Demon Sealers. Furthermore, anyone who wanted to be the Lord of the Mountain and Sea Realm itself had to master all of the Nine Hexes.

As for Transcendence... that would depend on one's personal fortune.

Meng Hao looked at the Fifth Mountain and Sea for a long moment, and then his right hand flashed with an incantation gesture. The power of Transcendence erupted out to shake the starry sky as he waved his finger, a profound light shining in his eyes.

"Sixth Mountain and Sea!

"I call upon the power of my name to take the Sixth Hex, the Life-Death Hex, and embody it in the Sixth Mountain and Sea. Henceforth... you are the Life-Death Mountain and Sea, responsible for the Tribulations and punishments within the Mountain and Sea Realm!

"Cultivators in this Mountain and Sea may cultivate my Life-Death Hex, and gain enlightenment of the Essences of life and death. This hex will now be called the Sixth Hex of the Mountains and Seas!"

Meng Hao's voice was natural law embodied. Magical symbols erupted in a tempest which radiated the power of life and death. They formed together into the outline of the Sixth Mountain and Sea, then began to rapidly absorb the surrounding rubble until the Sixth Mountain and Sea became visible.

As it descended to join the other five Mountains and Seas, a black and white aura appeared upon it. At first, there was a sharp contrast between the black and the white, but as it swirled and mixed, it became gray. Then, just as quickly, the black and the white separated again.

It was as if the difference between the realms of death and life were incredibly clear in the Sixth Mountain and Sea. This type of life and death was similar in some ways to the Fourth Mountain and Sea, and yet, was also very different.

That was because this type of life and death had to do with Tribulations and punishments, which could be unleashed upon the entire Mountain and Sea Realm. Anyone who practiced cultivation had to experience Heavenly Tribulation. Furthermore, those who committed grave mistakes would undergo Heavenly punishment. That punishment was like a blade raised aloft, transformed into a natural law. Everything had to be subject to natural law to be complete, and thus, instead of saying that the Sixth Mountain and Sea was the embodiment of punishment, it would be more accurate to say that it was natural law!

Whoever was the Lord of this Mountain and Sea could control the power of punishment, and enforce compliance with natural law.

As the Mountain settled into place, rumbling sounds echoed out. The Mountain and Sea Realm was already completely different than it had been before, as if it were more flexible and powerful, a state which was only beginning.

Without pausing for a moment, Meng Hao spoke yet again, his voice echoing out like thunder to be heard by all of the Mountain and Sea Realm cultivators, as well as the cultivators of the Vast Expanse School.

“Seventh Mountain and Sea!”

“I call upon the power of my name to take the Seventh Hex, the Karmic Hex, and embody it in the Seventh Mountain and Sea. Henceforth... you are the Karmic Mountain and Sea, responsible for Karma within the Mountain and Sea Realm!

“Cultivators in this Mountain and Sea may cultivate my Karmic Hex, and gain enlightenment of the Essence of Karma. This hex will now be called the Seventh Hex of the Mountains and Seas!”

Instantly, magical symbols appeared, and the fragments of the Mountains and Seas came together. The Seventh Mountain and Sea appeared, along with an astonishing power of Karma. The power which exploded out instantly eclipsed the power from the other six Mountains and Seas, and yet just as quickly, faded away. Everything went calm. It was as if the explosion of Karma had transformed into a net which came to settle over the entire Mountain and Sea Realm.

The Seventh Hex, the Karmic Hex, had been of incredible use to Meng Hao throughout his practice of cultivation. It was also the most enigmatic. Karma existed everywhere in Heaven and Earth. It was like a circle with the starting point being the cause of the Karma, and the apex being the effect. Those two points, of course, always connected.

All worlds required Karma, although it was usually an invisible and mysterious thing. Now that Meng Hao had Transcended, he had the power to make Karma the bones of the Seventh Mountain and Sea. Cultivators of the Seventh Mountain and Sea would now be innately adept regarding the Dao of Karma.

Whoever became the Lord of the Seventh Mountain and Sea would understand Meng Hao’s Seventh Hex, and would be able to unleash Heaven-shaking, Earth-shattering power.

Each of these majestic seven Mountains and Seas were different, yet they were all incredibly powerful and awe-inspiring. The Mountain and Sea Realm cultivators continued to offer worship, and many among the army of the Vast Expanse School were left gasping.

Even the countless souls of the Outsiders submerged within the sea of

flames were shaken.

What was happening now was something miraculous, something unbelievable, the likes of which no one had ever witnessed before.

That was the nature of Transcendence.

What I want, the Heavens shall NOT lack! What I don't want, had BETTER not exist in the Heavens!

Meng Hao waved his sleeve, and his eyes shone with brilliant light. After one last look at the Seventh Mountain and Sea, he thought about the Eighth Mountain and Sea, and everything he had done back when he had been there.

"Eighth Mountain and Sea!" he said. Instantly, that particular area in the starry sky began to distort.

Grandpa Meng was the most excited of all; he was now watching something occur that he had never imagined could actually happen. Not only was he able to see the Mountain and Sea Realm once again, he was also able to once again lay eyes on... the Eighth Mountain and Sea.

His reaction was the same as Ksitigarbha's when he saw the Fourth Mountain and Sea. He threw his head back and laughed uproariously, tears of joy streaming down his face.

"I call upon the power of my name to take the Eighth Hex, the Body-Mind Hex, and embody it in the Eighth Mountain and Sea. Henceforth... you are the Body-Mind Mountain and Sea, responsible for space within the Mountain and Sea Realm!

"Cultivators in this Mountain and Sea may cultivate my Body-Mind Hex, and gain enlightenment of the Essences of body and mind. It will be called the Eighth Hex of the Mountains and Seas!"

And then the Eighth Mountain and Sea appeared in full!

Boundless light rose up, along with countless ghost images. Instantly, the space around the Eighth Mountain and Sea suddenly went completely still.

That was Meng Hao's Eighth Hex, the first Demon Sealing Hexing magic he had learned. It had accompanied him throughout his life, and been used in battle on numerous occasions, always giving Meng Hao a shocking advantage and allowing him to turn the tide of the fight.

In terms of usefulness, it was no weaker than Karmic Hexing.

Meng Hao had a powerful attachment to the Eighth Hex, as did he to the Eighth Mountain and Sea. That was the place his mother's clan had called home, and where his Grandpa Meng had been a Mountain and Sea Lord.

It only felt right that the Eighth Hex become the bones of this new version of the Eighth Mountain and Sea.

With the Body-Mind Hex, cultivators from the Eighth Mountain and Sea would have incredible control over the Essence of space. Later on, they would be able to manipulate space in a way that could hardly be matched in the entire Mountain and Sea Realm.

In addition to that, their control of such power gave them the responsibility of defending the Mountain and Sea Realm. That was the Dao of space, something vast and limitless.

Whoever was the Lord of the Eighth Mountain and Sea would have a very high position. Not only would that person be on equal footing with all of the other Mountain and Sea Lords, their control over the power of space would, in some ways, allow them to disregard everything else.

The cultivators of the Eighth Mountain and Sea were bursting at the seams with excitement, and followed Grandpa Meng in shouting out at the tops of their lungs.

By now, the Mountain and Sea Realm was more than ninety percent complete. Eight Mountains and Seas rose high up, radiating dazzling light. They were all different, as were the cultivators from the respective Mountains and Seas, and when it came to measuring them up against each other, it would be very difficult to determine who was the most powerful.

That was because they were all powerful, and were all critical parts of

the Mountain and Sea Realm as a whole.

The First Mountain and Sea controlled beginnings and endings, and was the source of everything. The Second Mountain and Sea controlled what was real and unreal, and could clear inner devils from the hearts of cultivators. The Third Mountain and Sea had the power of the ancient and the present, and could manipulate time. There was almost no need to mention the Fourth Mountain and Sea, which housed the underworld and reincarnation. Most critical was the Fifth Mountain and Sea, the axis of the realm, a place of utmost importance regarding the five elements, the foundation of all cultivation.

The Sixth Mountain and Sea controlled life and death, the punishments and tribulations of the entire realm. Then there was the Seventh Mountain and Sea, where the Dao of Karma set all natural law.

These were the eight Mountains and Seas. And yet... a dragon without a head is no dragon. And the Mountain and Sea Realm was the same.

The Mountain and Sea Realm required... a Mountain and Sea more powerful than all of the others. It needed a symbol, a head, something with ultimate power that could cow any other Mountain or Sea which wavered from the true path.

If any other Mountain or Sea considered betraying the realm, there had to be a force which could unleash power to bring everything back into balance.

That was a power that wouldn't be placed within the hands of a single person, but rather, would be placed... within the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

Back when the Mountains and Seas had fallen in battle, the last stand had been taken in the Ninth Mountain and Sea. It had been the final line of defense. That was also where the Mountain and Sea Butterfly had come from, which now contained Meng Hao's parents as the incarnations of the wings.

Some of the most important and critical events of the war centuries ago had played out there!

If that alone didn't make the Ninth Mountain and Sea deserving of being the most powerful, there were two other reasons which were even more significant.

It was the location where Meng Hao had been born, and it was also the place he considered his ancestral home!

The starry sky shook, and lightning crashed. Everything twisted as colors flashed everywhere. Meng Hao's eyes shone with radiant light as he took a deep breath, and shifted his gaze to the empty spot behind the Eighth Mountain and Sea.

"Ninth Mountain and Sea... my home...." he said softly.

Chapter 1557: I Bestow Upon You the Title of Ninth Sea!

Meng Hao looked at the empty spot next to the Eighth Mountain and Sea, and then spoke in a voice which was soft, yet thrummed with the power of Transcendence. Waving his finger, he said, “I call upon the power of my name to take the Ninth Hex, the Seal the Heavens Hex, and embody it in the Ninth Mountain and Sea. Henceforth... you are the Heaven-Sealing Mountain and Sea, the most powerful of the Mountains and Seas, responsible for sealing the Heavens within the Mountain and Sea Realm!

“Cultivators in this Mountain and Sea may cultivate my Seal the Heavens Hex, and gain enlightenment of the Essence of Heaven-sealing. It will be called the Ninth Hex of the Mountains and Seas!”

In conjunction with his words, countless magical symbols appeared, far more than had appeared for any of the previous Mountains and Seas. Even the combination of all of the magical symbols from the previous eight Mountains and Seas added together couldn't match up.

Those magical symbols created a raging tempest which shook the starry sky, and radiated the aura of Heaven-sealing.

That aura stood completely apart from the starry sky of the Vast Expanse, as if it were above anything and everything. The instant it appeared, the other eight Mountains and Seas began to tremble in subservience.

And things had just begun! The Ninth Mountain and Sea hadn't even appeared in full, and yet all of the other Mountains and Seas were shaking. It was easy to imagine how powerful the Ninth Mountain and Sea would be when it finally appeared; it would truly be the strongest!

The Ninth Mountain and Sea would be able to dominate the other Mountains and Seas. With such power, and with such an Essence, the Ninth Mountain and Sea would definitely be the peak of all the Mountains

and Seas!

The outline of the Ninth Mountain was now visible, and the magical symbols had already begun to shape the planets. It was now possible to see Planet East Victory, Planet North Reed, Planet West Felicity, and of course... Planet South Heaven!

The surrounding cultivators of the Mountain and Sea Realm were far more shaken than they had been before. That was especially true of Meng Hao's old friends, whose eyes shone with unprecedented brightness.

Fatty was shaking, tears pouring down his face as he looked at the Ninth Mountain and Sea. Sun Hai, Fang Yu, Wang Youcai, Li Ling'er....

Everyone who viewed the Ninth Mountain and Sea as their home were now profoundly excited.

Xu Qing had the same reaction as she looked at Planet South Heaven and thought back to all the old memories....

Everyone watched as the rubble and fragments of the Mountains and Seas began to fill in the vast array of magical symbols. Even as the Ninth Mountain and Sea began to take shape in front of everyone's eyes, something unexpected occurred....

Every time one of the previous Mountains and Seas had formed, lightning would crackle, as though the will of the Vast Expanse were trying to interfere. However, it was never very intense. This time, though, as soon as the words left Meng Hao's mouth, the entire starry sky filled with so many lightning bolts that they were impossible to count. Rumbling booms echoed out in all directions as lighting appeared out of nowhere, seemingly pouring out from the stream of time itself.

Almost immediately, the area filled with lightning bolts whose target seemed to be the outline of the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

The lightning bolts' aim was to prevent the Ninth Mountain and Sea from fully appearing, to prevent the Seal the Heavens Hex from becoming the bones of that Mountain and Sea.

Meng Hao's eyes flickered with cold light as he took a step forward.

Instantly, incredible power erupted out. A huge shockwave spread out from the Ninth Mountain and Sea, spreading out in all directions and completely destroying any lightning that it touched.

“I’m in the middle of forging the Mountain and Sea Realm,” he growled. “Any interference can screw the hell off!” With that, he waved his sleeve and looked up into the starry sky, almost as if he were staring directly at the will of the Vast Expanse.

As their eyes met, the starry sky trembled. Meng Hao’s aura surged, and without another moment of hesitation, the will of the Vast Expanse fought back.

The entire starry sky shook, and the living beings in numerous worlds, land masses, and vortexes could all hear something roaring in their ears. It sounded like two giants standing next to each other, screaming at each other with divine sense.

Cracking sounds rang out as Meng Hao slammed into the will of the Vast Expanse. Instantly, rifts were torn open in all directions, vaporizing anything that got in their path.

After some time passed, the roar of rage from the will of the Vast Expanse faded away. However, Meng Hao still had a very grim expression on his face. He knew that his true battle with the will of the Vast Expanse was rapidly approaching.

Now that the will of the Vast Expanse had faded away and wasn’t attempting to interfere, the Ninth Mountain and Sea finished forming within the starry sky.

Everything trembled, and all of the other eight Mountains and Seas bowed their figurative heads!

And that was because the Seal the Heavens Mountain and Sea was without compare!

And yet, the Ninth Mountain and Sea wasn’t complete. The Ninth Mountain was fully formed, but as for the Ninth Sea, countless magical symbols formed the shape, and yet the flesh to form the seawater itself

was lacking.

The League was the soul, the Hexing magic became the bones, and the Mountains and Seas formed the flesh. However, for the flesh to form, the previous elements that made up the Mountain and Sea had to be present. The Ninth Sea had turned traitor, ensuring that when the Mountain and Sea Realm was actually destroyed, there had been nine Mountains, but only eight Seas.

Meng Hao looked at the spot which should be filled with water, and the magical symbols that formed the shape, then smiled and turned in the direction of Patriarch Reliance.

Patriarch Reliance cleared his throat, but quickly realized Meng Hao wasn't looking at him, and pulled his head into his shell. He had long since come to view Meng Hao with complete awe.

Meng Hao was looking at Patriarch Reliance's back, and a young, white-robed woman who stood there. Apparently, no matter how many years passed, she would always look young. Right now, she was standing there looking at Meng Hao, a slight smile on her face. A look of anticipation could be seen in her eyes, but she also seemed nervous, as if she knew exactly why Meng Hao was looking at her.

"All those years ago, I made you a promise that I would help you become a sea," he said softly. "Guyiding Tri-Rain, are you willing to become... the Ninth Sea of the Mountain and Sea Realm?"

The white-robed young woman shivered. This was her lifelong dream, to become a sea. Thousands of years ago, at the lake below Mount Daqing, Meng Hao had promised to help her make that dream come true.

"Yes!" she replied. Taking a deep breath, she clasped her hands and bowed to Meng Hao.

Meng Hao smiled and waved his right hand.

"I call upon the power of my name to bless Guyiding Tri-Rain with Righteous Bestowal. Henceforth, you are the Ninth Sea!"

Even as excitement and anticipation surged up within her, she flew off

of Patriarch Reliance's back, transforming into a lake with a surface like a mirror. It was an incredibly beautiful sight. In the blink of an eye, she merged into the countless magical symbols that made up the outline of the Ninth Sea.

After the fusion, a powerful aura radiated out. It was Guyiding Tri-Rain's aura, and yet, it was becoming more and more powerful. Rumbling sounds echoed out, and her energy continued to rise to unimaginable heights. Finally... the Ninth Sea had appeared!

It was far more majestic than the other eight Seas. This new Ninth Sea possessed crushing power that caused Heaven and Earth to shake violently.

That was because the Ninth Sea was like the Ninth Mountain, with Demon Sealing Hexing magic as the bones. The Seal the Heavens Hex was the ultimate Demon Sealing Hexing magic, so much so that even the combination of the other eight Hexes couldn't match up to it.

The Ninth Hex itself was composed of nine sealing marks, ensuring that the Ninth Mountain and Sea well deserved to be known as the most powerful of the Mountains and Seas.

The cultivators of the Ninth Mountain and Sea would have a special understanding of the Seal the Heavens Hex. However, the Ninth Hex was fundamentally difficult to gain enlightenment of, and therefore, any person who became the Mountain and Sea Lord there had to understand a minimum of three of the sealing marks which made it up.

Now that the Ninth Mountain and Sea had appeared, the entire Mountain and Sea Realm radiated a towering pressure. Rumbling sounds echoed out, shaking the starry sky. At the same time, the aura of Transcendence emanated out.

That aura caused any cultivator who sensed it to tremble, even 9-Essences experts.

Meng Hao's eyes shone brightly as he waved his sleeve. A sphere of light appeared, which was none other than the magical technique he had gained enlightenment of when staring at the sun that year on Planet East

Victory. That sphere began to gobble up all of the light in the area, and in the blink of an eye, was shining with blinding light. 1

Boundless light stabbed into the eyes of everyone present, a light filled with the power of Meng Hao's Transcendence. It was a sun, which contained terrifying power equivalent to the peak of 9-Essences.

"By means of Righteous Bestowal, I name you... the Sun of the Mountains and Seas!" Backed by the power of Transcendence, the magic of Righteous Bestowal transformed the sphere of light into a powerful sun which floated out to become part of the Mountain and Sea Realm.

Even as it illuminated the Nine Mountains and Nine Seas, Meng Hao's right hand flashed with an incantation gesture. Then he waved his hand, and a violet moon appeared. It was also a magical technique from Meng Hao's collection, which he had picked up in the Fang Clan ancestral land on Planet East Victory. 2

The power of Transcendence was unleashed, pouring into the moon, giving it might equivalent to the sun!

"By means of Righteous Bestowal, I name you... the Moon of the Mountains and Seas!" As the words left his mouth, the moon began to glow with soft, radiant light. It flew toward the Mountain and Sea Realm and began to circle around it just like the sun.

Now, the Mountain and Sea Realm was complete.

The starry sky shook, and all areas of the Vast Expanse trembled. Countless worlds quaked, and countless magical items suddenly went dark. All of that was because the number one magical treasure in all of the Vast Expanse had finally appeared.

The Mountain and Sea Realm!

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1. Meng Hao created the "Supernova Magic" in chapter 942.
2. He got the "Nethermoon Magic" in chapter 954.

Credits

Translator: [Deathblade](#)

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